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CONSTANTINOPLE

BY

EDMONDO DE AMICIS

TRANSLATED FROM THE SEVENTH ITALIAN EDITION

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BY

CAROLINE TILTON

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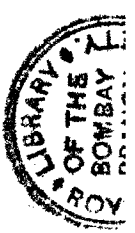

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CONSTANTINOPLE.

THE ARRIVAL.

THE emotion I felt on entering Constantinople, almost obliterated from my recollection all that I had seen in my ten days voyage from the Straits of Messina to the mouth of the Bosphorus. The blue Ionian Sea, motionless as a lake, the distant mountains of the Morea tinted with rose by the first rays of the sun, the ruins of Athens, the Gulf of Salonica, Lemnos Tenedos, the Dardanelles, and many persons and things that had diverted me during the voyage, all grew pale in my mind at the sight of the Golden Horn; and now, if I wish to describe them, I must work more from imagination than from memory.

In order that the first page of my book may issue warm and living from my mind, it must commence on the last night of the voyage, in the middle of the Sea of Marmora, at the moment when the captain of the ship approached me, and putting his hands upon my shoulders, said, "Signori, to-morrow at dawn we shall see the first minarets of Stamboul."

Ah! reader, full of money and ennui; you, who a few years ago, when you felt a whim to visit Constantinople, replenished your purse, packed your valise, and within twenty-four hours

quietly departed as for a short country visit, uncertain up to the last moment whether you should not after all, turn your steps to Baden-Baden! If the captain had said to you, "To-morrow morning we shall see Stamboul," you would have answered phlegmatically, "I am glad to hear it." But you must have nursed the wish for ten years, have passed many winter evenings sadly studying the map of the East, have inflamed your imagination with the reading of a hundred books, have wandered over one half of Europe in the effort to console yourself for not being able to see the other half, have been nailed for one year to a desk with that purpose only, have made a thousand small sacrifices, and count upon count, and castle upon castle, and have gone through many domestic battles; you must finally have passed nine sleepless nights at sea with that immense and luminous image before your eyes, so happy as even to be conscious of a faint feeling of remorse at the thought of the dear ones left behind at home; and then you might understand what these words meant, "To-morrow at dawn, we shall see the first minarets of Stamboul;" and instead of answering quietly, "I am glad to hear it," you would have struck a formidable blow with your closed fist upon the parapet of the ship as I did.

One great pleasure for me was the profound conviction I had that my immense expectations could not be delusive. There can be no doubt about Constantinople, even the most diffident traveller is certain of his facts; no one has ever been deceived, and there are none of the fascinations of great memories and the habit of admiration. It is one universal and sovereign beauty, before which poet and archeologist, ambassador and trader, prince and sailor, sons of the north and daughters of the

south, all are overcome with wonder. It is the most beautiful spot on the earth, and so judged by all the world. Writers of travels arriving there are in despair. Perthusers stammers, Tournefort says that language is impotent, Fonqueville thinks himself transported into another planet, La Croix is bewildered, the Vicomte de Marcellus becomes ecstatic, Lamartine gives thanks to God, Gautier doubts the reality of what he sees, and one and all accumulate image upon image ; are as brilliant as possible in style, and torment themselves in vain to find expressions that are not miserably beneath their thought. Chateaubriand alone describes his entrance into Constantinople with a remarkable air of tranquillity of mind ; but he does not fail to dwell upon the beauty of the spectacle, the most beautiful in the world, he says, while Lady Mary Wortley Montague, using the same expression, drops a perhaps, as if tacitly leaving the first place to her own beauty, of which she thought so much.

There is, however, a certain cold German who says that the loveliest illusions of youth and even the dreams of a first love are pale imaginations in the presence of that sense of sweetness that pervades the soul at the sight of this enchanted region ; and a learned Frenchman affirms that the first impression made by Constantinople is that of terror. Let the reader imagine the illusions which such words of fire a hundred times repeated, must have caused in the brains of two enthusiastic young men, one of twenty-four, and the other twenty-eight years of age! But even such illustrious praises did not content us, and we sought the testimony of the sailors. Even they, poor, rough fellows as they were, in attempting to give an idea of such beauty, felt the need of some word by simile beyond

the ordinary, and sought it, turning their eyes here and there, pulling their fingers, and making attempts at description with that voice that sounds as if it came from a distance, and those large, slow gestures with which such men express their wonder when words fail them. "To come into Constantinople on a fine morning," said the head steersman, "you may believe me, Signori, it is a great moment in a man's life."

Even the weather smiled on us; it was a warm, serene night; the sea caressed the sides of the vessel with a gentle murmur; the masts, and spars, and smallest cordage were drawn clear and motionless upon the starry heaven; the ship did not appear to move. At the prow there lay a crowd of Turks peacefully smoking their *narghiles* with their faces turned up to the moon, their white turbans shining like silver in her rays; at the stern, a group of people of every nation, among them a hungry-looking company of Greek comedians who had embarked at the Piræus. I have still before me, in the midst of a bevy of Russian babies going to Odessa with their mother, the charming face of the little Olga, all astonishment that I could not understand her language, and provoked that her questions three times repeated should receive no intelligible answer. On one side of me there is a fat and dirty Greek priest with his hat like a basket turned upside down, who is trying with a glass to discover the Archipelago of Marmora; on the other, an evangelical English minister, cold and rigid as a statue, who for three days has not uttered a word or looked a living soul in the face; before me are two pretty Athenian sisters with red caps and hair falling in tresses over their shoulders, who the instant any one looks at them, turn both together

toward the sea in order to display their profiles; a little further on an Armenian merchant fingers the beads of his oriental rosary, a group of Jews in antique costume, Albanians with their white petticoats, a French governess who puts on melancholy airs, a few of those ordinary looking travellers with nothing about them to indicate their country or their trade, and in the midst of them a small Turkish family, consisting of a papa in a fez, a mamma in a veil, and two babies in full pantaloons, all the four crouched under an awning upon a heap of mattresses and cushions, and surrounded by a quantity of baubles of every description and of every color under the sun.

The approach to Constantinople had inspired every one with an unusual vivacity. Almost all the faces that were visible by the light of the ship's lanterns were cheerful and bright. The Russian children jumped about their mother, and called out the ancient name of Stamboul; Zavegorod! Zavegorod! Here and there among the groups could be heard the names of Galata, of Pera, of Scutari; they shone in my fancy like the first sparkles of a great firework that was just about to burst forth. Even the sailors were content to arrive at a place where, as they said, they could forget for an hour all the miseries of life. Meantime a movement was perceptible at the prow among that white sea of turbans; even those idle and impassible Mussulmen beheld with the eyes of their imagination the fantastic outline of *Ummelemia* undulating upon the horizon; the mother of the world; the "city," as the Koran says, "of which one side looks upon the land and the other upon the sea." The very vessel seemed to quiver with impatience and to move forward of her own will without the aid of her engines.

Every now and then I leaned upon the railing and looked at the sea, from which seemed to arise the confused murmur of a hundred voices. They were the voices of those who loved me, saying, "Go on, go on, son, brother, friend! go on, enjoy your Constantinople. You have fairly earned it, be happy, and God be with you."

Not until night did any of the travellers descend under cover. My friend and I went in among the last, with slow and reluctant steps, unwilling to enclose within four narrow walls a joy for which the whole circuit of the Propontis seemed insufficient. About half-way down the stairs we heard the voice of the captain inviting us to come up in the morning upon the officers' reserved deck. "Be up before sunrise," he called; "whichever one comes late shall be thrown into the sea."

A more superfluous threat was never made since the world existed. I never closed an eye. I believe that the youthful Mahomet the Second, when on that famous night of Adrianople, agitated by his vision of the city of Constantinople, he turned and re-turned on his uneasy couch, did not make so many revolutions as I did in my berth during those four tedious hours of waiting; in order to dominate my nerves, I tried to count up to a thousand, to keep my eyes fixed upon the white water wreaths, which constantly rose around the port-hole of my cabin, to hum an air in cadence with the monotonous beat of the engines; but it was all in vain. I was feverish, my breath came in gasps, and the night seemed eternal. At the first faint sign of dawn I rose—my friend was already afoot; we dressed in wild haste and in three bounds were on deck. Horror of horrors! a black fog! The horizon was completely veiled on every side; rain

seemed imminent; the great spectacle of the entrance to Constantinople was lost, our most ardent hopes deluded; our voyage, in one word, a failure! I was annihilated. At this moment the captain appeared with his unfailing smile upon his lip. There was no need of speech, he saw and understood, and striking his hand upon my shoulder, said, in a tone of consolation, "It is nothing, nothing, do not be discouraged, gentlemen, rather bless the fog, thanks to it, we shall make the finest entrance into Constantinople that could be wished for; in two hours we shall have clear weather, take my word for it!" I felt my life come back to me. We ascended to the officers' deck; at the prow all the Turks were already seated with crossed legs upon their carpets, their faces turned toward Constantinople. In a few minutes all the other passengers came forth, armed with glasses of various kinds, and planted themselves in a long file against the left hand railing, as in the gallery of a theatre. There was a fresh breeze blowing; no one spoke. All eyes and every glass, became gradually fixed upon the northern shore of the Sea of Marmora; but as yet, there was nothing to be seen. The fog now formed a whitish band along the horizon; above, the sky shone clear and golden, directly in front of us, on the bows, appeared confusedly the little archipelago of the Nine Islands of the Princes, the *demonesi* of the ancients, a pleasure resort of the court in the time of the Lower Empire, and now used for the same purpose by the inhabitants of Constantinople.

The two shores of the Sea of Marmora were still completely hidden; not until an hour had passed, did those on deck behold them. But, it is impossible to understand any description of the

entrance to Constantinople without first having clearly in one's mind the configuration of the city. We will suppose the reader to have in front of him the mouth of the Bosphorus, that arm of the sea which divides Asia from Europe and joins the Sea of Marmora to the Black Sea. So placed, he has on his right hand the Asiatic coast, and the European shore on his left; here the antique Thrace, and there the ancient Hanatolia; moving onward, threading this arm of the sea, the mouth is hardly passed before there appears, on the left, a gulf, a narrow roadstead, which lies at a right angle with the Bosphorus, and penetrates for several miles into the European land, curving like the horn of an ox; whence its name of Golden Horn, or horn of abundance, because through it flowed, when it was the port of Byzantium, the wealth of three continents.

At the angle of the European shore, which on one side is bathed by the waters of the Sea of Marmora, and on the other by those of the Golden Horn, where once Byzantium stood, now rises upon seven hills, Stamboul, the Turkish city,—at the other angle, marked by the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus, stand Galata and Pera, the Frankish cities,—opposite the mouth of the Golden Horn, upon the hills of the Asiatic side, is the city of Scutari. That then which is called Constantinople is composed of three great cities, divided by the sea but placed the one opposite the other, and the third facing the other two, and so near, each to each, that the edifices of the three cities can be seen distinctly from either, like Paris or London at the wider parts of the Seine or the Thames.

The point of the triangle upon which stands Stamboul, bends toward the Golden Horn, and is that famous Seraglio

Point which up to the last moment hides from the eyes of those approaching by the Sea of Marmora, the view of the two shores of the Horn, that is, the finest and most beautiful part of Constantinople.

It was the captain of the ship, who with his seaman's eye discovered the first glimpse of Stamboul.

The two Athenian sisters, the Russian family, the English clergyman, Yank and I, and others who were all going to Constantinople for the first time, stood about him in a compact group, silent, and straining our eyes in vain to pierce the fog, when he, pointing to the left towards the European shore, called out, "Signori, behold the first gleam."

It was a white point, the summit of a very high minaret whose lower portion was still concealed. Every glass was at once levelled at it, and every eye stared at that small aperture in the fog as if they hoped to make it larger. The ship advanced swiftly. In a few moments a dim outline appeared beside the minaret, then two, then three, then many, which little by little took the form of houses, and stretched out in lengthening file. In front and to the right of us every thing was still veiled in fog. What we saw gradually appearing was that part of Stamboul which stretched out, forming a curve of about four Italian miles, upon the northern shore of the Sea of Marmora, between Seraglio Point and the castle of the Seven Towers. But the hill of the Seraglio was still covered.

Behind the houses shone forth one after another the minarets, tall and white, with their summits bathed in rosy light from the ascending sun. Under the houses began to appear the old battlemented walls—strengthened at equal distances by

towers, that encircle the city in unbroken line, the sea breaking upon them. In a short time a tract of about two miles in length of the city was visible; and, to tell the truth, the spectacle did not answer my expectation. We were off the point where Lamartine had asked himself, "Is this Constantinople," and exclaimed, "What a delusion!" "Captain," I called out, "Is this Constantinople?" The captain, pointing forward with his hand, "Oh, man of little faith!" he cried—"look there!"

I looked and uttered an exclamation of amazement. An enormous shade, a mass of building of great height and lightness, still covered by a vaporous veil, rose to the skies from the summit of a hill, and rounded gloriously into the air, in the midst of four slender and lofty minarets, whose silvery points glittered in the first rays of the sun. "*Santa Sophia!*" shouted a sailor; and one of the two Athenian girls murmured to herself, "*Hagia Sophia!*" (The Holy Wisdom.) The Turks at the prow rose to their feet. But already before and around the great basilica, other enormous domes and minarets, crowded and mingled like a grove of gigantic palm trees without branches, shone dimly through the mist. "The mosque of Sultan Ahmed," called out the captain, pointing; "the mosque of Bajazet, the mosque of Osman, the mosque of Latili, the mosque of Soliman." But no one gave heed to him any more, the fog parted on every side, and through the rents shone mosques, towers, mosses of verdure, houses upon houses; and as we advanced, higher rose the city, and more and more distinctly were displayed her grand, broken and capricious outlines, white, green, rosy and glittering in the light. Four miles of city, all that part of Stamboul that looks upon the Sea of Mar-

mora, lay spread out before us, and her dark walls and many-colored houses were reflected in the clear and sparkling water as in a mirror.

Suddenly the ship stopped to await the dissipation of the fog before advancing further, which still lay like a thick curtain across the mouth of the Bosphorus. After a few moments we cautiously proceeded. We drew near to the height of the old Seraglio. Then my curiosity became uncontrollable.

"Turn your face that way," said the captain, "and wait for the moment when the whole hill becomes visible." After a moment, "Now!" exclaimed the captain. I turned; the ship was motionless. We were close in front of the hill. It is a great hill, all covered with cypresses, pines, firs, and gigantic plane trees, which project their branches far beyond the walls, and throw their shadows upon the water, and from the midst of this mass of verdure, arise in disorder, separate and in groups, as if thrown about by chance, roofs of kiosks, little pavilions crowned with galleries, silvery cupolas, small edifices of strange and graceful forms, with grated windows and Arabesque portals; half hidden, and leaving to the fancy to create a labyrinth of gardens, corridors, courts; a whole city shut up in a grove; separated from the world, and full of mystery and sadness.

In that moment, though still slightly veiled in mist, the sun shone full upon it. No living soul was to be seen, no sound broke the silence. We stood with our eyes fixed upon those heights crowned with the memories of four centuries of glory, pleasure, love, conspiracy and blood, the throne, the citadel, the

tomb of the Great Ottoman Empire; and no one spoke or moved.

Suddenly the mate called out; "Signori, Scutari!" All eyes were turned to the Asiatic shore. There lay Scutari, the golden city, stretching out of sight over the tops and sides of her hills, veiled in the luminous morning mists, smiling and fresh as if created by the touch of a magic wand. Who can express that spectacle? The language that serves to describe our cities would give no idea of that immense variety of color and of prospect, of that wondrous confusion of city and of country, of gay, austere, European, Oriental, fanciful, charming and grand! Imagine a city composed of ten thousand little purple and yellow houses, of ten thousand gardens of luxuriant green, of a hundred mosques as white as snow; beyond a forest of enormous cypresses, the largest cemetery in the East, at the end immeasurable white barracks, villages grouped upon heights, behind which peep out others half hidden in verdure; and over all tops of minarets and white domes shining half way up the spine of a mountain that closes in the horizon like a curtain; a great city sprinkled into an immense garden, upon a shore here broken by jagged precipices clothed with sycamores, and there melting into verdant plains dotted with spots of shade and flowers; and the azure mirror of the Bosphorus reflecting all their beauty.

While I stood looking at Scutari, my friend touched me with his elbow to announce the discovery of another city, and there it was indeed, looking toward the Sea of Marmora, beyond Scutari and on the Asiatic side a long line of houses, mosques and gardens, near which the ship was passing, and

which had until now been hidden by the fog. With our glasses we could distinctly see the cafes, bazaars, the European houses, the staircases, the walls, bordered by kitchen gardens, and the small boats scattered along the shore. It was Kadi *Kioi* (the village of the Judges) built upon the ruins of the ancient Calcedonia, once the rival of Byzantium, that Calcedonia which was founded six hundred and eighty-five years before Christ, by the Megarians to whom the oracle of Delphi gave the title of the blind people, for having chosen that site instead of the point where Stamboul stands.

At last came glimmering through the veil some whitish spots, then the vague outline of a great height, then the scattered and vivid glitter of window panes shining in the sun, and finally Galata and Pera in full light, a mountain of many colored houses, one above the other; a lofty city crowned with minarets, cupolas, and cypresses; upon the summit the monumental palaces of the different embassies, and the great Tower of Galata; at the foot the vast arsenal of Tophane and a forest of ships; and as the fog receded, the city lengthened rapidly along the Bosphorus, and quarter after quarter started forth stretching from the hill tops down to the sea, vast, thickly sown with houses, and dotted with white mosques, rows of ships, little doors, palaces rising from the water; pavilions, gardens, kiosks, groves; and dimly seen in the mist beyond, the sun-gilded summits of still other quarters; a glow of colors, an exuberance of verdure, a perspective of lovely views, a grandeur, a delight, a grace to call forth the wildest exclamations. On the ship every body stood with open mouths; passengers and sailors, Turks, Europeans and babies, not a word was spoken,

no one knew which way to look. We had on one side Scutari and Kadi-Kioi; on the other side the hill of the Seraglio; in front Galata, Pera, the Bosphorus. To see them all one must spin round and round, and spinning throw on every side our hungry eyes, laughing and gesticulating without speech. Great Heaven! what a moment!

And yet the grandest and loveliest remained to be seen. We still lay motionless outside of Seraglio Point, and beyond that only could be seen the Golden Horn, and the most wonderful view of Constantinople is on the Golden Horn. "Gentlemen, attention," called out the captain, before giving the order to advance; "In three minutes we shall be off Constantinople." A cold shiver ran over me, my heart leaped. With what feverish impatience I awaited the blessed word, Forward! The ship moved, we were off! Kings, princes, potentates, and all ye fortunate of the earth, at that moment my post upon the ship's deck was worth to me all your treasury.

One moment, two, to pass Seraglio Point, a glimpse of an enormous space filled with light and colors, the point is passed. Behold Constantinople! sublime, superb Constantinople, glory to creation and man! I had never dreamed of such beauty!

And I, poor wretch, to describe, to dare to profane with my poor weak words that divine vision! Who could describe it? Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Gautier, what have you stammered? And yet imagination and words rush to my mind while they flee my pen. But let me try. The Golden Horn directly before us like a river; and on either shore two chains of heights on which rise and lengthen out two parallel chains of city, em-

bracing eight miles of hills, valleys, bays and promontories; a hundred amphitheatres of monuments and gardens; houses, mosques, bazaars, seraglios, baths, kiosks, of an infinite variety of colors; in the midst thousands of minarets with shining pinnacles rising into the sky like columns of ivory; groves of cypress trees descending in long lines from the heights to the sea, engarlanding suburbs and ports; and a vigorous vegetation springing and gushing out everywhere, waving plume-like on the summits, encircling the roofs and hanging over into the water. To the right Galata, faced by a forest of masts and sails and flags; above Galata, Pera, the vast outlines of her European palaces drawn upon the sky; in front, a bridge connecting the two shores, and traversed by two opposing throngs of many-colored people; to the left Stamboul stretched upon her broad hills, upon each of which rises a gigantic mosque with leaden dome and golden pinnacles; Saint Sophia, white and rose colored; Sultan Ahmed, flanked by six minarets; Soliman the Great crowned with ten domes; Sultana Valide mirrored in the waters; on the fourth hill the Mosque of Mahomet Second; on the fifth the Mosque of Selim; on the sixth the Seraglio of Tekyr; and above them all the white Tower of the Seraskiarat which overlooks the shores of both continents from the Dardanelles to the Black Sea. Beyond the sixth hill of Stamboul and beyond Galata there is nothing but vague profiles to be seen, points of city or suburb, foreshortened glimpses of ports, fleets, groves, vanishing into the azure air, looking not like realities, but visions of the light and atmosphere. How shall I seize the features of this prodigious picture? The eye is fixed for one moment upon the nearer shore,

upon a Turkish house or gilded minaret; but suddenly it darts off into that depth of luminous space towards which fly and vanish the two lines of fantastic cities, followed by the bewildered mind of the spectator. An infinite serenity and majesty is diffused over all this loveliness; a something of youthful and passionate which rouses a thousand memories of tales of enchantment and visions of spring; a something airy and grandly mysterious that carries the fancy beyond realities. The misty sky tinted with opal and with silver, forms a background on which everything is drawn with marvelous clearness and precision; the sapphire-colored sea dotted with crimson buoys gives back the minarets in trembling white reflections; the domes glitter; all the immensity of vegetation waves and quivers in the morning air; clouds of doves hover about the mosques; thousands of gilded and pointed caiques dart about the waters; the breeze from the Black Sea brings perfume from ten thousand gardens; and when drunk with the beauty of this Paradise, and forgetful of all else, you turn away, you see behind you with renewed wonder the shores of Asia closing the panorama with the pompous splendors of Scutari and the snowy peaks of Mount Olympus, the Sea of Marmora sprinkled with islets and white with sails; and the Bosphorus covered with ships winding between the endless files of temples, palaces, and villas and losing itself mysteriously among the smiling hills of the East.

The first emotion past, I looked at my fellow travellers, their faces were all changed. The two Athenian ladies had wet eyes; the Russian in that solemn moment, held the little Olga to her breast; even the cold English priest, for the first

time, let his voice be heard, exclaiming from time to time, "wonderful! wonderful!"

The ship had stopped not far from the bridge; in a few moments there had gathered about it a crowd of boats, and a throng of Turks, Greeks, Armenians and Jews, who, swearing and cursing in barbarous Italian, took possession of our persons and effects. After a vain attempt at resistance, we embraced the captain, kissed the little Olga, said good-bye to all, and descended into a four-oared caique, which took us to the custom house, from whence we climbed through a labyrinth of narrow streets to the Hotel de Byzantium, upon the top of the hill of Pera.

FIVE HOURS AFTER.

THE vision of this morning has vanished. The Constantinople of light and beauty has given place to a monstrous city, scattered about over an infinity of hills and valleys; it is a labyrinth of human ant-hills, cemeteries, ruins and solitudes; a confusion of civilization and barbarism which presents an image of all the cities upon earth, and gathers to itself all the aspects of human life. It is really but the skeleton of a great city, of which the smaller part is walls and the rest an enormous agglomeration of barracks, an interminable Asiatic encampment; in which swarms a population that has never been counted, of people of every race and every religion. It is a great city in process of transformation, composed of ancient cities that are in decay, new cities of yesterday, and other cities now being born; everything is in confusion; on every side are seen the traces of gigantic works, mountains pierced, hills cut down, houses leveled to the ground, great streets designed; an immense mass of rubbish and remains of conflagrations upon ground forever tormented by the hand of man. There is a disorder, a confusion, of the most incongruous objects, a succession of the strangest and most unexpected sights, that make one's head turn round; you go to the end of a fine street, it is closed by a ravine or precipice; you come out of the theatre to find yourself in the midst of tombs; you

climb to the top of a hill, to find a forest under your feet and a city on the hill opposite to you; you turn suddenly to look at the quarter you have just traversed and you find it at the bottom of a deep gorge, half hidden in trees; you turn towards a house, it is a port; you go up a street, there is no more city; only a deserted defile from which nothing but the sky is visible; cities start forth, hide themselves, rise above your head, under your feet, behind your back, far and near, in the sun, in the shade, among groves, on the sea; take a step in advance, behold an immense panorama; take a step backward, there is nothing to be seen; lift your eyes, a thousand minarets; descend one step, they are all gone. The streets, bent into infinite angles, wind about among small hills, are raised on terraces, skirt ravines; pass under aqueducts, break into alleys, run down steps, through bushes, rocks, ruins, sand hills. Here and there, the great city takes as it were, a breathing time in the country, and then begins again, thicker, livelier, more highly colored; here it is a plain, there it climbs, farther on it rushes downwards, disperses, and again crowds together; in one place it smokes and is land, in another sleeps; now it is all red, now all white, again all gold colors, and further on it presents the aspect of a mountain of flowers. The elegant city, the village, the open country, the gardens, the port, the desert, the market, the burial place, alternate—without end, rising one above the other, in steps, so that at some points these embrace at one glance, all the diversities of a province; an infinity of fantastic outlines are drawn everywhere upon the sky and water, so thickly and richly designed, and with such a wondrous variety of architecture, that they cheat the eye, and

seem to be mingling and twisting themselves together. In the midst of Turkish houses, rise European palaces; behind the minaret stands the bell-tower; above the terrace, the dome; beside the dome, the battlemented wall; the Chinese roofs of kiosks hang over the façades of theatres; the grated balconies of the harem confront the plate glass window; Moorish lattices look upon railed terraces; niches with the Madonna within, are set beneath Arabian arches; sepulchres are in the courtyards, and towers among the laborers' cabins; mosques, synagogues, Greek churches, Catholic churches, Armenian churches, rise one above the other, amid a confusion of vanes, cypresses, umbrella pines, fig and plane trees, that stretch their branches over the roofs,—an indescribable architecture, apparently of expediency, lends itself to the caprices of the ground, with a crowd of houses cut into points, in the form of triangular towers, of erect and overturned pyramids, surrounded with bridges, ditches, props, gathered together like the broken fragments of a mountain.

At every hundred paces all is changed. Here you are in a suburb of Marseilles, and it is an Asiatic village; again, a Greek quarter; again, a suburb of Trebizond. By the tongues, by the faces, by the aspect of the houses, you recognize that the country is changed. There are points of France, strips of Italy, fragments of England, relics of Russia. Upon the immense façade of the city is represented in architecture, and in columns, the great struggle that is being fought out, between the Christians that reconquer and the children of Islam, that defend with all their strength, the sacred soil. Stamboul, once a Turkish city only, is now assailed on every side by Christian quarters, which slowly eat into it along the shores of the

Golden Horn and the Sea of Marmora; on the other side the conquest proceeds with fury; churches, palaces, hospitals, public gardens, factories, schools, are crushing the Mussulman quarters, overwhelming the cemeteries, advancing from hill to hill, and already vaguely designing upon the distracted land the outlines of a great city, that will one day cover the European shore of the Bosphorus, as Stamboul now covers the shore of the Golden Horn.

But from these general observations the mind is constantly distracted by a thousand new things; there is a convent of Dervishes in one street, a Moorish barrack in another, and Turkish cafés, bazaars, fountains, aqueducts, at every turn. In one quarter of an hour you must change your manner of proceeding ten times. You go down, you climb up, you jump down a declivity, ascend a stone staircase, sink in the mud and clamber over a hundred obstacles, make your way now through the crowd, now through the bushes, now through a forest of rags hung out, now you hold your nose, and anon breathe waves of perfumed air. From the glowing light of an elevated open space whence can be seen the Bosphorus, Asia, and the infinite sky, you drop by a few steps into the gloom and obscurity of a network of alleys, flanked by houses falling to ruin, and strewn with stones like the bed of a rivulet. From the fresh and perfumed shade of trees, into suffocating dust and overpowering sun; from places full of noise and color, into sepulchral recesses, where a human voice is never heard; from the divine Orient of our dreams, into another Orient, gloomy, dirty, decrepit, that gradually takes possession of the imagination. After a few hours spent in this way, should any

one suddenly ask what is Constantinople like? You could only strike your hand upon your forehead, and try to still the tempest of thoughts. Constantinople is a Babylon, a world, a chaos. Beautiful? wonderfully beautiful. Ugly?—It is horrible!—Did you like it? madly. Would you live in it? How can I tell!—who could say that he would willingly live in another planet? You go back to your inn, full of enthusiasm, and disgust; bewildered, delighted, and with your head whirling, as if cerebral congestion had begun, and your agitation gradually quiets down into a profound prostration and mortal tedium. You have lived through several years in a few hours—and feel old and exhausted.

THE BRIDGE.

To see the population of Constantinople, it is well to go upon the floating bridge, about one-quarter of a mile in length, which extends from the most advanced point of Galata to the opposite shore of the Golden Horn, facing the great mosque of the Sultana Validé. Both shores are European territory; but the bridge may be said to connect Asia to Europe because in Stamboul there is nothing European save the ground, and even the Christian suburbs that crown it are of Asiatic character and color. The Golden Horn, which has the look of a river, separates two worlds, like the ocean.

The news of events in Europe which circulates in Galata and Pera clearly and minutely, and much discussed, arrives on the other shore confused and garbled, like a distant echo; the fame of great men and great things in the west are stopped by that narrow water as by an inseparable barrier; and over that bridge, where every day a hundred thousand people pass, not one idea passes in ten years.

Standing there, one can see all Constantinople go by in an hour. There are two exhaustless currents of human beings that meet and mingle forever from the rising of the sun until his setting, presenting a spectacle before which the market-places of India, the fair of Nijui-Novgorod, and the festivals of Pekin grow pale. To see anything at all, one must choose a

small portion of the bridge and fix his eyes on that alone, otherwise in the attempt to see all, one sees nothing. The crowd passes in great waves, each one of which is of a hundred colors, and every group of persons represent a new type of people. Whatever can be imagined that is most extravagant in type, costume, and social class may there be seen within the space of twenty paces and ten minutes of time. Behind a throng of Turkish porters who pass running, and bending under enormous burdens, advances a sedan-chair, inlaid with ivory and mother of pearl, and bearing an Armenian lady; and at either side of it a Bedouin wrapped in a white mantle and a Turk in muslin turban and sky-blue caftan, beside whom canters a young Greek gentleman followed by his dragoman in embroidered vest, and a dervise with his tall conical hat and tunic of camel's hair, who makes way for the carriage of a European ambassador, preceded by his *running footman** in gorgeous livery. All this is only seen in a glimpse, and the next moment you find yourself in the midst of a crowd of Persians, in pyramidal bonnets of Astrakan fur, who are followed by a Hebrew in a long yellow coat, open at the sides; a frowzy-headed gypsy woman with her child in a bag at her back; a Catholic priest with breviary staff; while in the midst of a confused throng of Greeks, Turks, and Armenians comes a big eunuch on horseback, crying out, *Larya!* (make way!) and preceding a Turkish carriage, painted with flowers and birds, and filled with the ladies of a harem, dressed in green and violet, and wrapped in large white veils; behind a Sister of Charity from the hospital at Pera, an African slave carrying a monkey, and a pro-

* Batistrada.

fessional story-teller in a necromancer's habit, and what is quite natural, but appears strange to the new comer, all these diverse people pass each other without a look, like a crowd in London; and not one single countenance wears a smile. The Albanian in his white petticoat and with pistols in his sash, beside the Tartar dressed in sheepskins; the Turk, astride of his caparisoned ass, threads pompously two long strings of camels; behind the adjutant of an imperial prince, mounted upon his Arab steed, clatters a cart filled with all the odd domestic rubbish of a Turkish household; the Mahometan woman a-foot, the veiled slave woman, the Greek with her red cap, and her hair on her shoulders, the Maltese hooded in her black *faldetta*, the Hebrew woman dressed in the antique costume of India, the negress wrapped in a many-colored shawl from Cairo, the Armenian from Trebizond, all veiled in black like a funeral apparition, are seen in single file, as if placed there on purpose, to be contrasted with each other.

It is a changing mosaic of races and religions that is composed and scattered continually with a rapidity that the eye can scarcely follow. It is amusing to look only at the passing feet and see all the foot-coverings in the world go by, from that of Adam up to the last fashion in Parisian boots—yellow Turkish babouches, red Armenian, blue Greek and black Jewish shoes; sandals, great boots from Turkestan, Albanian gaiters, low cut slippers, leg-pieces of many colors, belonging to horsemen from Asia Minor, gold embroidered shoes, Spanish *alporgatos*, shoes of satin, of twine, of rags, of wood, so many, that while you look at one you catch a glimpse of a hundred more. One must be on the alert not to be jostled

and overthrown at every step. Now it is a water-carrier with a colored jar upon his back; now a Russian lady on horseback, now a squad of Imperial soldiers in zouave dress, and stepping as if to an assault; now a crew of Armenian porters, two and two, carrying on their shoulders immense bars, from which are suspended great bales of merchandise; and now a throng of Turks who dart from left to right of the bridge to embark in the steamers that lie there. There is a tread of many feet, a murmuring, a sound of voices, guttural notes, aspirations interjectional, incomprehensible and strange, among which the few French or Italian words that reach the ear seem like luminous points upon a black darkness. The figures that most attract the eye in all this crowd are the Circassians, who go in groups of three and five together, with slow steps; big bearded men of a terrible countenance, wearing bear-skin caps like the old Napoleonic Guard, long black caftans, daggers at their girdles, and silver cartridge-boxes on their breasts; real figures of banditti, who look as if they had come to Constantinople to sell a daughter or a sister—with their hands embrued in Russian blood. Then the Syrians, with robes in the form of Byzantine dalmatie, and their heads enveloped in gold-striped handkerchiefs; Bulgarians, dressed in coarse serge, and caps encircled with fur; Georgians in hats of varnished leather, their tunics bound round the waist with metal girdles; Greeks from the Archipelago, covered from head to foot with embroidery, tassels and shining buttons.

From time to time the crowd slackens a little; but instantly other groups advance, waving with red caps and white turbans, amid which the cylindrical hats, umbrellas and pyra-

midal head-dresses of Europeans, male and female, seem to float borne onward by that Mussulman torrent. It is amazing even to note the variety of religions.

The shining bald head of the Capuchin friar, the towering janissary turban of an Ulema, alternate with the black veil of an Armenian priest, Imaums with white tunics, veiled nuns, chaplains of the Turkish army, dressed in green, with sabres at their side, Dominican friars, pilgrims returned from Mecca with a talisman hanging at their necks, Jesuits, Dervises, and this is very strange, Dervises that tear their own flesh in expiation of their sins, and cross the bridge under a sun-umbrella, all pass by. If you are attentive, you may notice in the throng, a thousand amusing incidents. Here it is a eunuch, showing the white of his eye at a Christian exquisite, who has glanced too curiously into the carriage of his mistress; there is a French *epcotte*, dressed after the last fashion plate, leading by the hand the begloved and bejewelled son of a pacha; or a lady of Stamboul, feigning to adjust her veil that she may peer more easily at the train of a lady of Pera; or a sergeant of cavalry in full uniform, stopping in the middle of the bridge to blow his nose with his fingers in a way to give one a cold chill; or a quack, taking his last sous from some poor devil, and making a cabalistic gesture over his face, to cure him of sore eyes; or a family of travellers arrived that day, and lost in the midst of a throng of Asiatic ruffians, while the mother searches for her crying children, and the men make way for them by dint of squaring their shoulders. Camels, horses, sedan-chairs, oxen, carts, casks on wheels, bleeding donkeys, mangy dogs, form a long file that divides the crowd in half.

Sometimes there passes a mighty pasha with three tails, lounging in a splendid carriage followed by his pipe-bearer on foot, his guard and one black slave, and then all the Turks salute, touching the forehead and breast, and the mendicant women, horrible witches, with muffled faces and naked breasts, run after the carriage crying for charity. Eunuchs not on service pass in twos and threes and fives together, cigaretre in mouth; and are recognized by their corpulence, their long arms, and their black habits. Little Turkish girls dressed like boys, in green full trousers and rose or yellow vests, run and jump with feline agility, making way for themselves with their henna-tinted hands. Boot-blacks with gilded boxes, barbers with bench and basin in hand, sellers of water and sweetmeats cleave the press in every direction, screaming in Greek and Turkish. At every step comes glittering a military division, officers in fez and scarlet trousers, their breasts constellated with medals; grooms from the Seraglio, looking like generals of the army, gendarmes, with a whole arsenal at their belts; zeibecks, or free soldiers, with those enormous baggy trousers, that make them resemble in profile, the Hottentot Venus; imperial guards with long white plumes upon their casques and gold-bedizened breasts; city guards of Constantinople; guards as one might say, required to keep back the waves of the Atlantic Ocean. The contrasts between all this gold and all those rags, between people loaded down with garments, looking like walking bazaars, and people almost naked, are most extraordinary. The spectacle of so much nudity is alone a wonder. Here are to be seen all shades of skin-colors, from the milky whiteness of Albania, to the crow blackness of Central Africa and the

bluish-blackness of Darfur; chests that if you struck upon them, would resound like a huge bass, or rattle like pottery; backs, oily, stony, full of wrinkles, and hairy like the back of a wild boar; arms, embossed with red and blue, and decorated with designs of flowers and inscriptions from the Koran. But it is not possible to observe all this in one's first passage over the bridge. While you are examining the tattoo on an arm, your guide warns you that a Wallachian, a Servian, a Montenegrin, a Cossack of the Don, a Cossack of Ukraine, an Egyptian, a native of Tunis, a prince of Imerezia is passing by. It seems that Constantinople is the same as it always was; the capital of three continents, and the queen of twenty vice realms. But even this idea is insufficient to account for the spectacle, and one fancies a tide of emigration, produced by some enormous cataclysm, that has overturned the antique continent.

An experienced eye discerns still among the waves of that great sea, the faces and costumes of Caramania and Anatolia, of Cyprus and Candia, of Damascus and Jerusalem, the Druse, the Kurd, the Maronite, the Croat, and others, innumerable varieties of all the anarchical confederations which extend from the Nile to the Danube, and from the Euphrates to the Adriatic. Seekers after the beautiful or the horrible will here find their most audacious desires fulfilled; Raphael would be in ecstacies, and Rembrandt would tear his hair. The purest types of Greek and Caucasian beauty are mingled with flat noses and woolly heads; queens and fairies pass beside you; lovely faces, and faces deformed by disease and wounds; monstrous feet, and tiny Circassian feet no longer than your

hand, gigantic porters, enormously corpulent Turks, and black sticks of skeleton shadows of men that fill you with pity and disgust; every strangest aspect in which can be presented the ascetic life, the abuse of pleasure, extreme fatigue, the excess of opulence, and the misery that kills. Who loves colors may here have his fill. No two figures are dressed alike. Here are shawls twisted around the head, savage fillets, coronets of rags, skirts and under-vests in stripes and squares like harlequins, girdles stuck full of knives that reach to the arm-pits, Mameluke trousers, short drawers, skirts, togas, trailing sheets, coats trimmed with ermine, vests like golden cuirasses, sleeves puffed and slashed, habits monkish and habits covered with gold lace, men dressed like women, and women that look like men; beggars with the port of princes, a ragged elegance, a profusion of colors, of fringes, tags, and fluttering ends of childish and theatrical decorations, that remind one of a masquerade in a mad-house, for which all the old-clothes dealers in the universe have emptied their stores. Above the hollow murmur that comes from this multitude, are heard the shrill cries of the sellers of newspapers in every tongue; the stentorian shout of the porters, the giggling laugh of Turkish women, the squeaking voices of eunuchs, the falsetto trill of blind men chanting verses of the Koran, the noise of the bridge as it moves upon the water, the whistles and bells of a hundred steamers, whose dense smoke is often beaten down by the wind so that you can see nothing at all. All this masquerade of people embarks in the small steamboats that leave every moment for Scutari, for the villages on the Bosphorus, and the suburbs of the Golden Horn; they spread through Stamboul, in the bazaars, in the

mosques, in the suburbs of Fanar and Balata, to the most distant quarters on the Sea of Marmora; they swarm upon the Frankish shore, to the right towards the sultan's palace, to the left, towards the higher quarters of Pera, from whence they fall again upon the bridge by the innumerable lanes that wind about the sides of the hills; and thus they bind together Asia and Europe, ten cities and a hundred suburbs, in one mighty net of labor, intrigue and mystery, before which the mind becomes bewildered. It would seem that the spectacle should be a pleasing one; but it is not so. The first amazement over, the festive colors fade; it is no longer a grand carnival procession that is passing; it is humanity itself filing by with all its miseries and follies, with all the infinite discord of its beliefs, and its laws; it is a pilgrimage of a debased people and a fallen race; an immensity of suffering to be helped, of shame to be washed out, of chains to be broken; an accumulation of tremendous problems written in characters of blood, which can only be solved by torrents of blood; and it is all horribly sad. And then the sense of curiosity is rather blunted than satisfied by this endless variety of strange objects. What extraordinary evolutions occur in the human soul! A quarter of an hour had not passed after my arrival on the bridge when I was abstractedly drawing arabesques with my pencil upon a beam and thinking to myself between two yawns, that there was some truth in Madame de Stael's famous sentence—"travelling is the most melancholy of amusements."

STAMBOUL.

To recover from this condition of amazement, one has only to dive into one of the thousand alleys that wind about the flanks of the hills of Stamboul. Here there reigns profound peace, and here can be contemplated in tranquillity every aspect of that mysterious and jealous East, which on the other side of the Golden Horn is only seen in fugitive glimpses, amidst the noisy confusion of European life. Here everything is strictly Oriental. After a quarter of an hour's ramble, you have seen no one, and heard not a sound. The houses on either side are all of wood, painted in different colors, their upper stories projecting over the lower; and the windows protected in front by a sort of grated gallery, and closed by small wooden lattices, giving to the street a singular aspect of mystery and gloom. In some places the streets are so narrow that the projecting parts of opposite houses almost touch each other, and you may walk for a long distance under the shadow of these human cages, and under the very feet of the Turkish women, who pass the greater part of the day seeing only one thin strip of sky. The doors are all closed, the windows of the ground floor grated; everything betrays jealousy and suspicion; it is like going through a city of monasteries. Suddenly you hear a laugh, and raising your eyes, catch a glimpse through some small aperture, of a tress of hair and a sparkling

eye that instantly disappear. Here and there you may surprise a lively, low-voiced conversation going on across the street, but it ceases at once, at the noise of footsteps. Who knows what network of gossip and intrigue you may have momentarily disturbed. You see no one, but a thousand eyes see you; you are alone, but you feel as if you were surrounded by a crowd; and involuntarily you lighten your step, and cast down your eyes, as if wishing to pass unobserved. An opening door or the sound of a closing lattice, startles you like a loud noise. The street seems to promise nothing of amusing or interesting; but in a moment you see a green grove with a white minaret darting from the midst of it; a Turk dressed in red coming toward you; a black woman slave standing in a door-way; a Persian carpet hanging from a window, and each forms a picture so full of life and harmony, that you could look at it for an hour. Of the few people who pass you by, not one looks at you. Only now and then a voice at your shoulder calls out—*giaour!* (infidel)—and turning, you see a boy just disappearing round a corner. Sometimes you see the door of a house open, and you stop short, expecting to behold some beauty of the harem, when out trips an European lady in full Russian costume, who with a murmured *adieu*, or *au revoir*, walks quickly away, leaving you with eyes and mouth wide open. In another street, quite Turkish and completely silent, you are startled by the sound of a horn, and the trampling feet of horses; you turn, and can hardly believe your eyes. An omnibus of large dimensions, rolling forward on two iron rails, that had escaped your notice, and full of Turks and Franks, with its conductor in uniform, and its placards with the tariff

like a tramway of Paris or New York. The astounding nature of such an apparition in one of these streets is not one to be expressed in words ; it seems an immense joke, and you look at the familiar vehicle as if you had never seen one before. Some of these solitary streets open into squares, shaded by one great plane tree. On one side there is a fountain, where camels are drinking ; on the other a café, with a row of mattresses before the door, and some Turks reclining, smoking ; close by, a monstrous fig-tree, embraced by a vine whose branches bend nearly to the ground, showing between their leaves, the distant azure of the Sea of Marmora, with two or three white sails. A glowing white light and a mortal silence invest these places with so solemn and melancholy a character, that they are never to be forgotten, though seen but once. Onward you go, drawn as by some hidden charm in the quiet, which enters little by little into the soul, and steeps it in dreamy reverie, and after a little all sense of time and distance is lost. You come to vast spaces with traces of a recent conflagration; declivities with a few houses scattered here and there, the grass growing about them and great paths winding among them ; high points, from which the eye embraces streets, alleys, gardens, hundreds of houses, and nowhere any human creature, nor smoke arising, nor open door, nor the least trace of life ; so that you might fancy yourself alone in that immense city, and you feel a shiver of terror at the thought. But, descend the slope, arrive at the end of these narrow streets, and all is changed. You are in one of the great thoroughfares of Stamboul, flanked by monuments of the most magnificent character. You walk in the midst of mosques, kiosks, minarets, arched galleries, fountains in

marble and *lapis-lazuli*, mausoleums of departed sultans, resplendent with arabesques and gold inscriptions, walls covered with mosaics; under roofs of carved cedar wood, in the shadow of a luxuriant vegetation, that overtops the walls and gilded railings of the gardens, and fills the air with perfume. At every step you meet the carriages of pashas, officers, aid-de-camps, eunuchs of great houses, a procession of servants and parasites that comes and goes between the different ministries. Here you recognize the metropolis of a great empire in all its magnificence and power. There is a grace of architecture, a murmur of water, a freshness of shade, which caress the senses like soft music, and fill the mind with smiling images. By these streets shall you reach the great squares where the Imperial mosques are situated, and you stand amazed before them. Each one of these forms, as it were, the nucleus of a small city of colleges, hospitals, schools, libraries, shops, baths, that almost pass unnoticed, shadowed as they are by the enormous dome that overtops them.

The architecture, which you had imagined to be very simple, presents instead an extraordinary variety of detail that attracts the eye on every side. Here are domes covered with lead, strangely formed roofs that rise one above the other, aerial galleries, enormous porticoes, windows with columns, arches with festoons, fluted minarets, surrounded by small terraces in open work, like lace; monumental doors and fountains covered with embroidery in stone; walls spangled with gold, and of a thousand colors; the whole chiselled, and worked in the boldest and lightest manner, and shaded by oak trees, cypresses and willows, from which come flocks of birds that circle in slow flight around

the domes, and fill with music all the recesses of those immense buildings. One is conscious of a feeling stronger and deeper than that of mere curiosity. Those monuments that are as it were a colossal marble affirmation of an order of sentiments and ideas diverse from those in which we have been born and grow, the skeleton of a race and faith hostile to our own, which tell us in mute language of superb lines and daring heights, the glories of a God who is not ours, and of a people before whom our ancestors trembled, inspire a respect mingled with awe that overcomes curiosity and holds it at a distance.

Within, under the shadow of the colonnades are a few Turks making their ablutions at the fountains, beggars crouching at the bases of columns, veiled women gliding slowly under the arches; a solemn silence reigns, and the mind is conscious of a sort of voluptuous melancholy, that both attracts and puzzles the understanding. Galata and Pera seem very far away. You are alone in another world, in an olden time, in the Stamboul of Soliman the Great and Bajazet the Second, and when emerging from among these stupendous works of the Osmanlee, you stand in that other Constantinople, meanly built of wood, falling into decay, full of filth, misery, and squalor, you feel bewildered, as if awaking from a splendid dream. As you advance, the houses become colorless, and the lattices are dropping to pieces, the basins of the fountains covered with slime and refuse; dwarfish mosques with cracked walls and wooden minarets, stand in the midst of weeds and nettles; ruined mausoleums, broken steps, passages choked with stones and rubbish, whole quarters fallen into a dreary decrepitude, where no sound is heard, save the flutter of a stork or falcon, or the gut-

tural cry of the *muezzin*, as he chants the word of God from the top of some hidden minaret.

No city represents the nature and philosophy of the people better than Stamboul. All grand and beautiful things are of God, or of the sultan, image of God upon earth; every thing else is transitory and is unregarded, being a mere mundane thing. The pastoral tribe has become a nation; but its instinctive love for rural nature, for contemplation and indolence, has preserved to its metropolis the aspect of an encampment. Stamboul is not a city; she neither labors, nor thinks, nor creates; civilization beats at her gates and assaults her in her streets; she dreams and slumbers in the shadow of her mosques, and takes no heed. It is a city unbound, scattered, deformed, that rather represents the resting place of a pilgrim race than the power of a founded state; an immense sketch of a metropolis; a great spectacle, but not a great city. And it is not possible to conceive any just idea of it. One must start from the first hill, that which forms the point of the triangle, and is bathed by the Sea of Marmora. Here is what may be called the head of Stamboul; a monumental quarter, full of memories, of splendor, and of light. Here are the old Seraglio, where Byzantium first rose with her Acropolis, and the temple of Jove, and the palace of the Empress Placidia, and the baths of Arcadio; here are the mosques of Saint Sophia and the Sultan Ahmed, and the At-Meidan which occupies the site of the ancient Hippodrome, where upon an Olympus of bronze and marble, and amid the shouts of a crowd, robed in silk and purple, flew the golden chariots before the eyes of the Emperors, glittering with jewels. From this hill you

descend into a valley not very deep, where extend the western walls of the Seraglio, marking the confines of ancient Byzantium, and here is the Sublime Porte, by which you enter the palace of the Grand Vizier and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ; an austere and silent quarter in which seems gathered all the sadness of the empire's fate. ' You ascend a second hill, upon which stands the marble mosque of Miri-Osmanié,—Light of Osman,—and the burned column of Constantine, that once sustained a bronze figure of Apollo with the head of the emperor, and stood in the middle of the ancient Forum, surrounded by porticoes, triumphal arches, and statues. Beyond this hill opens the valley of the bazaars, which extends from the mosque of Bajazet to that of the Sultana Validé, and contains an immense labyrinth of covered streets or arcades, full of noise and people, from which you emerge with dimmed eyes and buzzing ears. On the third hill, which dominates both the Sea of Marmora and the Golden Horn, rises the gigantic mosque of Soliman, the rival of Saint Sophia—"joy and splendor of Stamboul," as the Turkish poets say, and the wondrous tower of the Ministry of War, which stands upon the ruins of the ancient palace of Constantine, sometime inhabited by Mahomet the Victorious, then converted into a Seraglio for the old Sultanas. From the third to the fourth height extends like an aerial bridge the enormous aqueduct of the Emperor Valentinian, formed of rows of light arches, and garlanded with green, its pendent vines and creeping plants waving above the houses in the populous valley. Passing under the aqueduct, you mount the fourth hill.

Here, upon the ruins of the famous church of the Holy Apostles, founded by the Empress Helena, and rebuilt by

Theodora, stands the mosque of Mahomet the Second, surrounded by hospitals, schools, and caravanserais; beside the mosque, are the slave bazaars, the baths of Mahomet, and the granite column of Marcius, still bearing its marble cippus, with the imperial eagles; and near the column, the place where the famous massacre of the Janissaries was accomplished, then called the place of the Et-Meidan. Upon the fifth hill is the mosque of Selim, near the ancient well of St. Peter, now converted into a garden. Below, along the Golden Horn, extends the Fanar, or Greek quarter, the seat of the patriarchate, where antique Byzantium took refuge, with the descendants of the Paleologlii and the Comneni, and where the horrid massacres of 1821 took place. Upon the sixth hill is the land that was occupied by the eight cohorts of the forty thousand Goths of Constantine, outside the circuit of the first walls, which only embraced the fourth hill; the space occupied by the seventh cohort still bears the name of Hebdomon. Here also remain the walls of the palace of Constantine Porfirogenitus, where the emperors were crowned, now called by the Turks Tekir-Serai, or Palace of the Princes. At the foot of the sixth hill lies Balata, the Jews' quarter, a filthy place, running along the shore of the Golden Horn as far as the walls of the city, and beyond Balata, the ancient suburb of Blacherne, once ornamented by palaces with gilded roofs, the favorite residences of the emperors, famous for the great church of the Empress Pulcheria, and for its sanctuary of relics; now full of ruins and sadness. At Blacherne begins the battlemented wall that runs from the Golden Horn to the Sea of Marmora, encircling the seventh hill, where was once the Forum-Boarium, and

where still lies the pedestal of the column of Arcadio; the most oriental and the grandest of the hills of Stamboul, between which and the other six, flows the little river Lykus, that enters the city near the Carisio gate, and throws itself into the sea not far from the ancient gate of Theodosius. From the walls of Blacherne can be seen the suburb of Ortaksiler, descending gently towards the sea and crowned with gardens; beyond Ortaksiler, the suburb of Eyub, the holy ground of the Osmanlee, with its pretty mosque, and its vast cemetery white with tombs and mausoleums, and shaded by a grove of cypresses; behind Eyub is the high plain of the ancient military camp, where the legions raised the new emperors upon their shields; and beyond the high plain, other villages, whose vivid colors sparkle amid the verdure of groves bathed by the last waters of the Golden Horn. Such is Stamboul. It is divine; but the heart swells at the thought that this interminable Asiatic village stands upon the ruins of that second Rome, that immense museum of treasures torn from Italy, Greece, Egypt, and Asia-Minor, whose record fills the mind like some heavenly vision. Where now are the grand porticoes that traversed the city from the sea to the walls, the gilded cupolas, the colossal equestrian statues that rose upon Titanic pedestals in front of amphitheatres and baths; the bronze sphinxes couched upon porphyry pedestals, the temples and palaces that reared their granite fronts among an aerial company of marble gods and silver emperors? All gone and transformed. The bronze statues have been melted into cannon; the copper sheathing of the obelisks reduced to money; the church of St. Irene is an arsenal, the well of Constantine an office; the pedestal of the column of

Arcadio a blacksmith's shop ; the Hippodrome a horse-market ; ivy and rubbish cover the foundations of the imperial city, church-yard grasses grow upon the threshold of the amphitheatres, and a few inscriptions calcined by fire and mutilated by the scimetars of the invaders, record that upon this hill once stood the wonderful metropolis of the Empire of the East. Stamboul sits upon the ruins like an odalisque upon a tomb, awaiting her hour.

AT THE INN

And now the reader will follow me to my inn and take breath for a while.

A great part of that which I have described was seen by my friend and myself on the day of our arrival; let the reader imagine what a condition our heads were in when we returned to our hotel at night. In the street we had not exchanged a word, and we were hardly in our room before we sank upon a sofa, and looking each other in the face, asked at the same moment and in one voice:

"What do you think of it?"

"And to think that I came here to paint!"

"And I to write!"

And we laughed in each other's faces with friendly compassion. Indeed, that evening, and for several days after, his majesty Abdul-Aziz might have offered me as a prize a whole province of Asia Minor, and I could not have succeeded in putting together ten lines about the capital of his states, so true is it that, to describe great things you must be at a distance from them, and to remember well, you must have forgotten a little first. And then how could any one write in a room from which he could see the Bosphorus, Scutari, and the summit of Mount Olympus? The hotel itself was a spectacle. Every hour in the day the staircases and corridors swarmed

with people from every country. Twenty nationalities sat down every day at the *table de hôte:* at dinner, I could not get it out of my head that I was a delegate from the Italian government, and would be expected to get upon my legs as soon as the fruit was on the table to discuss some great international question. There were blooming faces of ladies, wild artist heads, ill-favored visages of not to be mistaken adventurers, Byzantine virgins who only lacked the golden nimbus, strange and sinister faces; and every day they changed. When everybody talked at once at dessert it was a veritable tower of Babel. From the first day I had made the acquaintance of several Russians who were infatuated with Constantinople. Every evening we met, returning from the extremest points of the city, and each of us had a story to tell of his travels that day. One had climbed to the top of the tower of Seraskierat, another had visited the cemetery of Eyub, a third came from Scutari, a fourth from a sail on the Bosphorus; the conversation was all interwoven with brilliant bits of description; and when words were wanting, the sweet and perfumed wines of the Archipelago came to our aid and suggested them. There were also some of my own fellow-citizens, dandy critics, who caused me to devour much silent wrath at the way in which, from soup to fruit, they did nothing but say evil of Constantinople; there were no sidewalks, and the theatres were dark, and there was no place to pass the evening. They had come to Constantinople to pass the evening! One of them had made the journey up the Danube. I asked him how he liked the great river. He answered that nowhere in the world did they cook the sturgeon as upon the royal and imperial Austrian company's steamers. Another

was a charming type of the travelling *amoroso;* one of those who travel to seduce and subjugate, with a note-book in which he jots down his conquests. He was a long, bland youth, who inclined his head with a mysterious smile when the Turkish women were talked of, and when he took part in the conversation it was in short sentences, broken by sips of wine. He arrived always a little late for dinner, and seated himself with the air of one who had just been playing the Sultan, and between one dish and another, he toyed with small folded notes, that might have been love letters from the ladies of the harem, but were probably hotel bills. There was a young Hungarian, tall, nervous, with two most diabolical looking eyes, and a hasty, feverish way of talking, who after having been secretary to a rich gentleman of Paris, had enrolled himself among the Pontifical Zouaves at Algeria, was wounded and taken prisoner by the Arabs, escaped from Morocco, and returning to Europe, went off to the Hague hoping to get an officers' brevet to go and fight the Achins; failing at the Hague, he decided to enter the Turkish army; but passing through Vienna on his return to Constantinople, got a pistol ball in his neck, in a duel about a woman (and here he showed the scar); rejected also at Constantinople—"What am I to do?" he said. "I am the child of fortune; I must fight somewhere. I have found some one who will take me to India;" and here he showed the ticket for his voyage. "I will be an English soldier; in the interior there is always something doing; I only want to fight; what does it matter whether I get killed or not? One of my lungs is gone already."

Another original was a Frenchman, whose whole life seemed

to pass in a perpetual war against the postal administrations. He had a question pending with the Austrian, French and English post-offices; he sent protests to the *Neue Freie Presse;* launched telegraphic impertinences at all the postal stations on the Continent, had every day a dispute at some post-office window, did not receive a letter in time, or wrote one that did not arrive at its address, and related all his misfortunes and all his altercations at table, always concluding with the assurance that the postal service had shortened his life. I remember also a Greek lady, with a diabolical countenance, oddly dressed, and always alone, who every evening rose from the table in the middle of dinner and went away, after having made a cabalistic sign over the plate which no one ever succeeded in making out. Nor have I forgotten a Wallachian couple, a handsome young fellow of five and twenty, and a girl just past childhood, who appeared one evening only, and who were indubitably fugitives; he the ravisher and she the accomplice; for, you had only to fix your eye upon them for an instant to see both blush crimson, and every time the door opened, they jumped as if set on springs. There were a hundred others whom I might recall. It was a magic lantern. My friend and I, on the days of the arrival of a steamer, amused ourselves watching the people as they came in, tired and bewildered, some of them still excited by the spectacle they had seen on entering the harbor, and an expression on their faces as if they said—what world is this?—Where are we? One day there arrived a young lad who was quite mad with the delight of finding himself in Constantinople, the dream of his childhood; and he held his father's hand in both of his, while the father said, in an agitated voice:—*Je*

*suis heureux de te voir heureux, mon cher enfant.** We passed the hot hours of the day at our window, and looked at the Tower of the Maiden, that rises, white as snow, on a solitary rock in the Bosphorus, opposite Scutari, and while we weave our own fancies round the legend of the Prince of Persia, that sucked the aspic poison from the arm of the beautiful Sultana, every day at the same hour a little boy in the opposite house came and made mouths at us. Everything was strange in this hotel. Among other things we encountered every evening at the entrance door two or three equivocal looking figures, who seemed to be providers of models for painters, and who apparently took us all for painters, for they whispered in our ears, mysteriously:—"A Turk?—a Greek?—an Armenian?—a Jewess?—a negress?"

* I am happy to see you happy, my dear child.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

But let us return to Constantinople, and rove about like the birds of the air. Here all caprices may be permitted. We can light our cigars in Europe, and drop the ashes in Asia. Rising in the morning, we can inquire—"What part of the world shall I visit to-day?—There is choice between two continents and two seas. We have at our command, horses standing saddled in every square, sailboats in every cove, steamboats at every flight of steps; the darting caique, the flying *talika*, and an army of guides speaking all the languages of Europe. Do you wish to hear an Italian comedy? to see the dancing dervishes? or the buffoons of Casagheuz? or the Turkish Pulcinella? Do you crave the licentious songs of the smaller Parisian theatres? or will you assist at a gymnastic performance by gypsies? Will you hear an Arabic legend related by a professional story-teller, or will you go to the Greek theatre? hear an Imaum preach; see the Sultan pass by? Ask and receive. All nationalities are at your service; the Armenian to shave you, the Jew to black your boots, the Turk to show you to your boat, the negro to shampoo you in your bath, the Greek to bring you your coffee, and every one of them to cheat you. If you are thirsty, as you walk about, you can refresh yourself with ices made from the snows of Olympus; you can drink the water of the Nile, like the Sultan; or, if you have a weak stomach, the water of the Euphrates; or if you are nervous, the water of the Danube. You can drive like the

Arab of the Desert, or like the *gourmand* at the *Maison Dor'e*. Do you wish to take a midday nap, there are the cemeteries; to distract your thoughts, the bridge of the Sultana Validè; to indulge in dreamy revery, the Bosphorus; to pass the Sunday, the Archipelago of the Princes; to see Asia-Minor, the Mount of Bulgurlà; to see the Golden Horn, the Tower of Galata; to see every thing, the tower of the Seraskierat. But this is a city even more strange than beautiful. Things that never present themselves together in your mind, are here seen together by your eyes. The caravan for Mecca, and the direct train for the ancient metropolis of Brussa, both start from Scutari; under the mysterious walls of the Old Seraglio passes the railway to Sofia; Turkish soldiers cross the path of the Catholic priest as he carries the Holy Sacrament to the dying; the people keep holiday in the burial grounds; life, death, pleasure, pain, are all mingled and confounded. There is the movement of London with the lethargy of oriental idleness, an immense public life, and a private life of impenetrable mystery; an absolute despotism, and a license without bounds. For the first few days you can comprehend nothing; every moment it seems as if the disorder must cease, or a revolution must break out; every evening you return to your inn, feeling as though you were arriving after a long journey; every morning you ask yourself—"Am I really near Stamboul?" One impression effaces another, wishes crowd upon you, time hurries by; you would like to stay there all your life; you would like to get away to-morrow. But when the attempt is to be made to describe this chaos! —then comes the temptation to make one bundle of all the books and papers on your table, and throw the whole out of the window.

GALATA.

My friend and I did not really recover our usual calmness of mind until the fourth day after our arrival. We were on the bridge one morning, uncertain as to what we should do that day, when Yank proposed to me to make one first grand promenade with one determined purpose, and with tranquil souls, to observe and study. "We will take," said he, "the northern shore of the Golden Horn, and do the whole of it, even if we have to walk till nightfall. We will eat our breakfast in a Turkish tavern, take our *siesta* under the shade of a plane tree, and come home in a caique." I accepted the proposition; we provided ourselves with cigars and small change, and giving one glance at a map of the city, turned our faces toward Galata.

Let the reader who wishes to know Constantinople sacrifice himself and bear us company.

It was from Galata that our excursion was to commence. Galata is built upon a hill that forms a promontory between the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus, and upon the site of the great cemetery of ancient Byzantium. The streets are almost all narrow and tortuous, bordered by taverns, pastry-cook shops, butchers' and barbers' shops, Greek and Armenian cafés, merchants' offices, workshops, and barracks; the whole dark, damp, muddy and sticky as in the lowest London quarter. A dense

and busy crowd throng the streets, constantly opening before carriages, porters, donkeys, and omnibuses. Almost all the trade of Constantinople passes through Galata. Here are the Exchange, the Custom House, the officers of the Austrian Lloyds, those of the French Messageries; churches, convents, hospitals and warehouses. An underground railway unites Galata to Pera. If it were not for the turbans and fezes in the street, it is not at all Oriental in its character. French, Italian, and Genoese are heard spoken on all sides. The Genoese are here as if in their own houses, and have still rather the air of masters, as when they closed the port at their pleasure, and answered the Emperors' threats with cannon. But little remains of the monuments of their ancient power, beyond some old houses upheld by great pilasters and heavy arches, and the antique edifice where once resided the Podestà. Old Galata has almost entirely disappeared. Thousands of small houses have been cleared away to make room for two long streets, one of which mounts the hill towards Pera, and the other runs parallel to the sea-shore from one end of Galata to the other.

My friend and I chose the latter for our ramble, perpetually taking refuge in the shops before the advance of great omnibuses, preceded by half naked Turks who cleared the way with strokes of a whip. At every step resounded in our ears the cry of the Turkish porter, *Sacun-ha!*—(clear the way!) or the Armenian water-carrier, *Varme-su!*—the Greek water-seller, *Çrio nero*—the Turkish donkey boy, *Barada!*—the sweetmeat seller, *Sherbet!*—the newspaper vender, *Neologos!* the Frank coachman, *guarda! guarda!* After about ten minutes walking, we were deaf. At a certain point we discovered,

to our astonishment, that the street was no longer paved, and that the pavement appeared to have been recently taken up. We looked about for a reason, and an Italian shopkeeper satisfied our curiosity. That street leads, it appears, to the Sultan's palaces. A few months ago, as the Imperial cortege was passing through it, the horse of his majesty Abdul-Aziz slipped and fell, and the good Sultan, justly irritated, ordered that the offending pavement should be removed, from the point where the horse fell, as far as his palace. At this memorable spot we fixed the eastern terminus of our pilgrimage, and turning our backs upon the Bosphorus, directed our steps, by a series of dirty, winding alleys towards the tower of Galata. The city has the form of an expanded fan, and the tower represents its handle. It is a round and very high tower, of a dark color, terminating in a conical point, formed by its copper roof, under which runs a range of large windows, or kind of glazed gallery where night and day a guard watches for the first sign of any conflagration that may break out in the city. The Galata of the Genoese extends as far as this tower, which rises in fact upon the line of the wall that once separated Galata from Pera; no traces of which wall are now to be found. Nor is the tower, the antique edifice, erected in honor of the Genoese who fell in battle; for it was rebuilt by Mahomet the Second and before that had been restored by Selim the Third; but it is none the less a monument crowned with the glory of Genoa, and an Italian can not look upon it without proudly remembering that handful of merchants, sailors and soldiers, haughty and bold and heroically stubborn, who for ages held aloft the banner of the republic, treating on equal terms with the Emperors of the East.

Passing the tower we found ourselves in a Mussulman cemetery, the cemetery of Galata; a great cypress wood that from the summit of the hill of Pera descends steeply to the Golden Horn, shading a myriad of little columns of stone or marble, that incline in all directions and are strewn in disorder all down the descent. Some of these little columns are crowned with the figure of a turban, and retain traces of color and inscriptions; others end in a point; many are overturned; and some are broken off at top, their turbans carried clean away; and these are supposed to have been raised to the janissaries, whom Sultan Mahmoud thus dishonored after death. The greater part of the graves are indicated by a prism shaped mound with a stone at either end, upon which, according to the Mussulman belief, the two angels Nekir and Munkir are to seat themselves when they come to judge the souls of the dead. Here and there are to be seen small enclosures surrounded by a low wall or a railing, in the middle of which stands a column surmounted by a large turban, and about it other small columns: it is a pasha, or some great noble, buried in the midst of his wives and children. Little paths wind all about the wood; a Turk sits in the shade smoking his pipe; some children run and jump among the graves; a cow is feeding there; hundreds of turtle-doves coo among the cypresses; groups of veiled women pass by; and in the distance between the trees shines the blue background of the Golden Horn striped by the white minarets of Stamboul.

Leaving the cemetery we enter the principal street of Pera. Pera is one hundred metres above the level of the sea, is airy and cheerful, and looks down upon the Golden Horn and the

Bosphorus. It is the West End of the European colony; the centre of pleasure and elegance. The street we follow is bordered by English and American hotels, handsome cafés, glittering shops, theatres, consulates, clubs, and palaces of ambassadors; among which that of Russia is the largest and most conspicuous, dominating Pera, Galata, and the suburbs like some great fortress. Here swarms a crowd quite different from that of Galata.

Almost all wear stove-pipe hats, and the ladies are crowned with plumed and flowery French bonnets. There are exquisites from Greece, from Italy, and France; merchants of high pretensions, attachés of the different legations, officers of foreign ships of war, ambassadorial coaches, and equivocal figures of every country. Turks stop to admire the wax busts in the barbers' shops, and Turkish women stand open-mouthed before the windows of the milliners; Europe talks in a loud voice, jokes and giggles in the middle of the street; the Mussulman feels himself in a strange land and hastens by with his head a shade less lofty than at Stamboul. My friend made me turn and look back at Stamboul that lay behind an azure veil in the distance, with the Seraglio, Santa Sofia, and the Mosque of Sultan Ahmed gleaming through; another world than that we stood in—"and now," said he—"look here." I dropped my eyes and read in a shop-window—*La Dame aux Camélias—Madame Borary—Mademoiselle Giraud ma femme.** Presently it was my turn to stop my companion and show him a marvellous café, where, at the end of a long dark corridor, an immense window, spread wide open, displayed at what seemed a

* Three licentious French novels.

great distance, a magnificent view of Scutari illuminated by the sun.

We had nearly reached the end of the grand street of Pera, when we heard a thundering voice declaiming in French "I love thee, Adèle—I love thee more than life!" We looked in each other's faces in amazement. Presently through a fissure in the wall we beheld a garden with rows of seats, a stage, and a company of actors rehearsing. A Turkish lady at a little distance peeped also through the wall and quivered with laughter. An old Turk passing by shook his head reprovingly. Suddenly the lady gave a shriek and fled; other women near screamed and turned their backs. What had happened? Only a Turk, as naked as he was born, a man about fifty years old, known to all Constantinople, whose fancy it is to promenade in that fashion. The poor wretch jumped along over the stones, yelling and laughing, while a crowd of boys followed him making a most infernal racket. "He will be arrested, I hope?" said I to the door-keeper of the theatre. "Not at all," he replied; "He has been going about like that for months, in perfect liberty." Meantime down the street of Pera we could see people coming out of their shops to look, women running away, girls hiding their faces, doors being closed, heads popping in and out of windows; and this goes on all day, and nobody troubles himself to put an end to it!

Coming out of the street of Pera, we found ourselves near another Mussulman cemetery, shaded by a cypress grove, and enclosed by a high wall. We never should have guessed if we had not been told, the meaning of that wall, newly erected; that the grove sacred to the repose of the dead had been turned

into a sort of pleasure garden for soldiers! Further on, in fact, we found the enormous artillery barrack, built by Schalil-Pasha; a solid rectangular edifice, in the Turkish renaissance style, with a door flanked by light columns and surmounted by the crescent and golden star of Mahmoud, with projecting galleries, and windows emblazoned with arms and arabesques. Before the barrack passes the street of Dgiedessy, which is a prolongation of that of Pera, and beyond, various squares and streets. Here every Sunday evening there passes a long procession of carriages and foot passengers, all the fashionable world of Pera, that comes to pass its evening in the cafés and beer-gardens of the Barrack. We stopped at the café of the Bella-Vista—worthy of its name, for it commands a most enchanting view of the Mussulman suburb of Funduclá, the Bosphorus covered with ships, the Asiatic shore sprinkled with gardens and villages, Scutari and her white mosques, and a lovely confusion of green and azure, and light that seems a dream to remember. We left it with regret, and felt ourselves wretchedly mean as we paid eight miserable cents for our two cups of coffee, and that vision of a terrestrial paradise.

From the Bella-Vista we passed directly into that great field of the dead where are interred, in separate cemeteries, people of all religions, except the Hebrews. It is a thick forest of cypresses, acacias and sycamores, amid which glimmer thousands of white sepulchral stones, looking in the distance like the ruins of a city. Between the trees shines the Bosphorus with the Asiatic shore. Wide paths wind about it, where Greeks and Armenians are walking. Upon some of the tombs sit Turks, cross-legged, and admiring the view. There is a

freshness of shade, and a peacefulness that give one the sensation of having entered some great sombre cathedral. We stopped in the Armenian cemetery. The sepulchral stones are all large and flat, and covered with inscriptions in the elegant Armenian character, and on nearly all of them is sculptured some emblem of the trade or profession of the deceased. There are hammers, pens, necklaces; the banker is represented by a pair of scales, the priest by a mitre, the barber by a basin, the surgeon by a lancet. On one stone we saw the image of a severed head, streaming with blood; it was the tomb either of a murdered man, or of one who had been judicially executed. An Armenian lay beside it in the grass, asleep, with his face turned up to the sky. We entered the Mussulman cemetery. Here also was an infinity of short columns scattered about in disorderly groups; those erected to women had an ornament in relief representing flowers; many were surrounded by shrubs and flowering plants. As we stood looking at one of these, two Turks came up, leading a child between them, and seating themselves upon a tomb, opened a bundle and began to eat. When they had finished, the elder one of the two wrapped up something in a paper—it looked like a fish and a piece of bread—and with a respectful gesture, placed the little packet in a hole near the head of the grave. This done, they both lighted their pipes and smoked, while the child played about among the tombs. It was after explained to us that this fish and bread were left as a mark of affection to their friend, probably recently deceased; and the hole in which they placed it is to be found in every Turkish tomb, near the head, so that through it the dead may hear the lamentations of their friends,

and may receive from them a few drops of rose water or the perfume of a flower. Their funeral smoke completed, the two pious Turks took the child between them, and vanished among the cypresses.

Proceeding on our way, we soon found ourselves in another Christian quarter—Pancaldi, with spacious streets and new buildings, surrounded by villas, gardens, hospitals, and barracks. It is the farthest from the sea of all the suburbs, and after visiting it, we turned back toward the Golden Horn. In the last street, we witnessed a new and solemn spectacle; the passage of a Greek funeral. A silent crowd filled the street on both sides; first came a group of Greek priests, in embroidered robes; then the archimandrite with a crown upon his head, and a long gown richly decorated with gold; some young ecclesiastics in brilliant-colored dresses; a quantity of friends and relations in their richest costumes, and in the midst of them a bier, wreathed with flowers, on which lay the body of a girl of fifteen, with uncovered face, and resplendent in satin and jewels. The little snow-white face had an expression of pain about the contracted mouth, and two beautiful tresses of black hair lay over the shoulders and bosom. The bier passed by, the crowd closed in, and we remained alone and saddened in the deserted street.

Ascending the hill of Pancaldi, and crossing the dry bed of a torrent, we mounted another hill and reached another suburb; San Dimitri. Here the population is almost all Greek. Black eyes and thin aquiline noses are to be seen on every side; old men of patriarchal aspect; slender, haughty young men; women with their hair on their shoulders; boys with astute

visages, romping in the middle of the street among the hens and pigs, and filling the air with the sound of their silvery and harmonious speech. We approached a group of these last, who were playing with stones and chattering all together, when one, a child of about eight years old, and the wildest of them all, every moment throwing his little fez into the air and yelling, *Zito! Zito!*—(Hurra!) suddenly turned to another who was seated on a door-step, and called out—*Checchino! Buttami la palla!*"* I seized him by the arm, and said—"You an Italian?"—"No, sir," he replied, "I belong to Constantinople."

"And who taught you to speak Italian?" I asked.

"Who indeed!" said he, "why, mamma, of course."

"And where is mamma?" At this there advanced a smiling woman, with a child in her arms, and told me that she was from Pisa, the wife of a Leghorn marble-cutter, that she had lived eight years in Constantinople, and this was her son. If this good woman had been a handsome matron, with a turreted crown upon her head, and a mantle upon her ample shoulders, she could not have represented Italy more vividly to my heart and eyes. "How came you here?" I asked. "And what do you think of Constantinople?"

"What shall I say?" she answered, smiling ingenuously. "It is a city which—to tell the truth, it always seems like the last day of the carnival." And here giving the rein to her Tuscan tongue, she told me that as *for the Mussulmans, their god is Mahomet*, that a Turk may marry four wives, that the Turkish language is a good one for those who can understand a word of it, and other novel things of the same kind; but

* "Frank, throw me the ball."

spoken in that tongue, in that Greek quarter, it seemed to me sweeter than any fresher news could be, and I went away leaving a few coins in the boy's hand, and murmuring to myself—"Ah! a taste of Italy, now and then, does one a world of good."

We turned up next in another Greek quarter, called Sataola, where, as our stomachs cried out for food, we seized the occasion to visit the interior of one of those innumerable taverns, which are so singular of aspect, and all formed upon one model. An immense room, big enough for a theatre; lighted generally only by the door, and surrounded by a high balustraded galliery of wood. On one side there is an enormous stove, at which a brigand in his shirt sleeves is frying fish, turning roasts, mixing sauces, and in other ways occupying himself in the shortening of human life; on the other side a bench where another bandit is distributing red and white wine in goblets with handles; in the middle and in front some dwarf seats without backs, and some tables but little higher than the seats, which remind one of a cobbler's bench. We entered with some hesitation, because of a group of Greeks and Armenians of the lowest class, who might have resented our presence in a disagreeable way, but they did not deign even to glance at us. The inhabitants of Constantinople are, I think, the least curious of any people in the world; one must be either the Sultan, or the madman of Pera, and run naked through the streets, in order to attract the slightest notice. We seated ourselves in a corner and waited. No one came. Then we remembered that in a Constantinople tavern, people waited on themselves. First we went to the stove and de-

manded a roast; God only knows of what animal; then to the counter and secured a goblet of the resinous wine of Tenedos, and carrying the whole to a table that just reached to our knees, we turned up our eyes at each other, and consumed the sacrifice. We paid our score with resignation, and silently issued forth, in dread that if we opened our mouths, we should bark or bray, and resumed our journey towards the Golden Horn.

After ten minutes walk, we are once more in the heart of Turkey; in the great Mussulman suburb of Kassim-Pasha, a city thick set with mosques and convents of dervishes, full of flower and vegetable gardens, which occupies a hill and a valley, and which extending to the Golden Horn, embraces the whole of the ancient bay of Mandracchia, from the cemetery of Galata to the promontory that overlooks Balata, on the opposite shore. From the heights of Kassim-Pasha, the spectacle is an enchanting one. Below upon the shore, you see the immense arsenal of Ters-Kané; a labyrinth of docks, factories, squares, storehouses and barracks, that extends for a mile along that part of the Golden Horn which is used as a port for vessels of war; the light and elegant building of the Ministry of Marine, that seems floating on the water, is seen upon the dark green background of the cemetery of Galata; the harbor is full of small steamboats and caiques full of people, that dart about among the iron-clads lying at anchor, and old frigates dating from the Crimean war; and on the opposite shore, Stamboul, the aqueduct of Valentinian, that throws its lofty arches against the blue sky, the great mosques of Soliman and Mahomet the Second, and a myriad of houses and minarets. To enjoy the

spectacle longer, we seated ourselves before a Turkish café, and absorbed a fourth or fifth of those twelve cups of coffee which every one at Constantinople is required to swallow in a day, whether he wants them or not. It was a mean little place, but like all the Turkish cafés, perfectly original; not very different probably, from the first café of the time of Soliman the Great, or from those into which Amurath Fourth broke, with his scimetar in his hand, when he made his noctural rounds and castigated the vendors of the prohibited liquor. Of how many imperial edicts, of how many theological disputes and sanguinary struggles has not this black liquid been the cause; "this enemy of sleep, and of fecundity"—as the more austere ulemas call it;—"this genius of dreams and exciter of the imagination," as it is named by the ulemas of broader opinions; now, after love and tobacco, it is the dearest comfort to all, even the poorest Osmanlé. Coffee is drank on the tops of the Towers of Galata and the Seraskierat, in all the steamboats, in the cemeteries, in the barbers' shops, at the baths, in the bazaars. No matter in what corner of Constantinople you may find yourself, you have only to cry out, without turning your head:—*café ge!* (coffee seller!) and in three minutes a cup is smoking before you.

Our café was a whitewashed room, wainscoted with wood to the height of a man, with a low divan running all round it. In one corner there was a stove at which a Turk with forked nose was making coffee in a small copper coffee-pot, and [illegible]t out as he made it into tiny cups, putting in the sugar [illegible]e time; for, at Constantinople, the coffee is made [illegible]y customer, and is brought him already sugared,

together with a glass of water that every Turk drinks before approaching the cup of coffee to his lips; upon the wall was suspended a small mirror, and beside it a sort of rack containing razors with fixed handles; the greater part of the cafés being also barbers' shops, and not unfrequently the café keeper is also a dentist and a blood-letter, and operates upon his victims in the same room where the other customers are taking their coffee. Upon the opposite wall hung another rack full of crystal *narghilés* with long flexible tubes, twisted like serpents, and *chibouks* of earthenware with cherry wood stems. Five pensive Turks were seated upon the divan smoking the *narghilé*, while three others sat in front of the door on low straw seats without backs, one beside the other, pipe in mouth, and their shoulders leaning against the wall; before the mirror sat a fat dervish in a camels' hair gown, having his head shaved by one of the shop boys. No one looked at us when we sat down, no one spoke, and except the master of the café and his assistant, no one made a movement. There was no sound but the bubble of the water in the *narghilés*, that resembled the purring of so many cats. Each one looked straight before him with fixed eyes, and absolutely no expression. It was like a small wax-work show. Many of these scenes remain forever impressed upon my memory. A wooden house, a Turk seated, a lovely distant view, a great light, and a great silence. Such is Turkey. Every time that name rises in my memory, these mazes pass before it, as when I think of Holland, a canal and a mill instantly present themselves. We next find ourselves in the small Turkish suburb of Pialè-Pasha, and stop before a mosque which gives it its name. It is a white

mounted by six graceful domes, with a court surrounded by an arched colonnade, a slender minaret, and a grove of gigantic cypresses. At that moment all the small houses about it were closed, the streets deserted, the court of the mosque itself in perfect solitude; the light and shadow of high noon lay over all things, and no sound broke the silence save the buzzing of wasps or flies. We looked at our watches; it wanted three minutes to twelve; one of the five canonical Mussulman hours, in which the *muezzin* appears upon the terrace of his minaret to chant to the four quarters of the horizon the sacramental formula of Islam. We knew well that there was not in all Constantinople, a minaret upon which there does not appear, at the moment fixed, punctual as a clock-work automaton, the announcer of the Prophet. And yet it appeared a strange thing that there also, in that remote extremity of the immense city, upon that solitary mosque, in that profound silence, the figure should appear and the voice be heard. I held my watch in my hand, and both of us watched intently the small door upon the terrace of the minaret. The minute hand touched the sixteenth black dot, and no one had appeared. "He will not come!" I said.—"He is here!" cried Yank. There he was. The parapet of the terrace concealed all but his face, and the distance rendered the features invisible. He stood a moment silent: then covering his ears with his hands, and turning up his face to the sky, he chanted in a high, tremulous voice, and very slowly, with a solemn and lamenting accent, the sacred words, that were then resounding from every minaret in Africa, Asia, and Europe:—"God is great! There is but one God! Mahomet is the prophet of God! Come to prayer! Come and

be saved! God is great! God is one alone! Come to prayer!"

He chanted the same words towards each of the four points of the compass, and then vanished. At the same instant, there came to our ears faintly, the last notes of another distant voice, that sounded like the cry of some creature in distress, and then the silence fell again, and we remained also silent, conscious of a vague sadness, as if those voices of the air had counselled prayer to us alone, and left us to ourselves, like two souls abandoned of God. No tolling bell has ever touched my heart like this; and on that day I understood for the first time why Mahomet, calling the faithful to prayer, had preferred the human voice to the trumpet of the Israelites, or the rattle of the early Christians. He was long uncertain as to his choice, and it was a chance that the whole world did not take on an entirely different aspect from that which it now bears; because, had he chosen the rattle, which would afterwards have been changed into a bell, the minaret also would have necessarily been transformed, and one of the most original and graceful features of an oriental city and landscape would have been lost forever.

Ascending the hill from Pialè-Pashà towards the west, we saw the whole of the Golden Horn, and all Stamboul, from Eyub to the Seraglio hill; four miles of gardens and of mosques, a prospect of such beauty and grandeur that it should have been contemplated upon one's knee, like a celestial vision. The desolate spot on which we stood was the Ok-Meidan, or place of arrows, where the Sultans used to go to draw the bow, according to the usage of the kings of Persia. There are still standing, at unequal distances, a few small marble columns, with inscrip-

tions, marking the points where the Imperial arrows fell. The elegant kiosk, with its tribune, from which the Sultan shot, is also there. In the fields to the right, once stretched a long file of beys and pashas, living points of admiration, with which the Padishah did homage to his own dexterity, to the left stood twelve pages of the Imperial house, who ran to pick up the arrows and to mark the points where they fell; around behind the trees and bushes, a few rash Turks contemplated in hiding the august figure of the *grand Seigneur;* and upon the tribune in a superb athletic attitude stood Mahmoud, the most vigorous archer in the empire, whose sparkling eyes made all beholders drop their own in humility, and whose famous beard, black as a crow of Mount Taurus, stood out from afar, upon his milk-white mantle, splashed with the blood of the Janissaries. Now, everything is changed and prosaic; the Sultan fires at a mark with a revolver in the court of his palace, and the Ok-Meidan is given over to infantry soldiers and rifle-practice. There is a convent of dervishes on one side, a solitary café on the other; and the whole plane is desolate and melancholy as a steppe.

We descended into another small Turkish suburb, called Piri-Pashà, perhaps after the famous Grand Vizier of Sultan Selim, who educated Soliman the Great. Piri-Pashà looks over the Israelitish suburb of Balata, on the opposite shore. We met no one but a few beggars and dogs. But the solitude enabled us the better to consider the peculiarities of the place. It is a singular thing. In that suburb as in every other part of Constantinople, when you are within it, after having seen it first from the sea or from the neighboring heights, you have the same impression as when you go upon the stage during the perform-

ance of a ballet, after having seen it from the boxes; you are astonished that such an assemblage of mean and ugly things should have produced such a brilliant illusion. I believe there is no city in the world where beauty is so purely an appearance, an illusion, as it is in Constantinople. Seen from Balata, Piri-Pashà is a charming little spot, all glowing with color and garlanded with verdure, reflected in the waters of the Golden Horn like a nymph, and invoking a hundred images of love and pleasure. Go into it, and all this beauty vanishes. A few small shabby houses, painted in staring colors like booths at a fair, a few narrow and dirty courts looking like the haunts of witches; dusty fig-trees and cypresses in groups, gardens encumbered with rubbish, deserted alleys, misery, dirt, and wretchedness, such is Piri-Pashá. But go down a few steps, jump into a caique, and with four or five strokes of the oar, behold a fantastic little town, in all the pomp of its unreal grace and beauty.

Still skirting the Golden Horn, we descend into another suburb, vast, populous, and of a strange aspect, when we become almost immediately aware that we are no longer among Mussulmen. The ground seems to swarm with diseased and filthy children; deformed and ragged old women sit in the doorways, working with skeleton hands among old iron-ware, bones, and rags; men clothed in long, dirty garments and with a ragged handkerchief bound round their heads, glide furtively by close to the walls; sinister faces at the windows; rags pendent from house to house; litter and filth at every step. It is Hasskioj, the Jewish quarter, the ghetto of the northern shore of the Golden Horn, which fronts that of the other shore,

and which during the Crimean war were connected together by a wooden bridge now entirely disappeared. Here begins another long chain of arsenals, military schools, barracks and exercising grounds, that extend almost to the end of the Golden Horn. But of all this we saw nothing, because by this time both head and legs had given out. Already everything that we had seen was confounded in our minds; we felt as if we had been journeying for a week; we thought of distant Pera with a slight sensation of home-sickness, and would have turned back then and there, but for the solemn compact made upon the bridge; and Yank reviving my spirits, according to his custom, with the march in *Aida*, we proceeded on our way.

Crossing another Mussulman cemetery, and ascending another hill, we entered the suburb of Halidgi-Oghli, inhabited by a mixed population; a little city, where at every turn, one encountered a new race and a new religion. We went up, we went down, we climbed, we wound about among tombs, mosques, churches, and synagogues; we skirted gardens and crossed squares; we met handsome Armenian matrons, and light-mannered Turkish women who leered at us from under their veils; we heard Greek, Armenian, and Spanish spoken—the Spanish of the Hebrews—and we walked, and walked. Some time or other we must arrive at the end of this Constantinople! we said to each other. Everything in the world *has* an end!—already the houses were less thick, kitchen-gardens appeared, we passed one last group of sheds, and arrived—at another suburb.

The Christian suburb of Sudludge, standing upon a hill surrounded, as usual, by gardens and burial grounds. At the foot of this hill once existed the only bridge that united the two

shores of the Golden Horn. But we *have* come to the end, for this suburb is the last, and God willing, our excursion is finished. Looking about for a place to rest, we mounted a steep and bare ascent and found ourselves in the largest Jewish cemetery of Constantinople: a vast plain covered with myriads of overturned stones, which looks like a town ruined by an earthquake, without tree or flower, or blade of grass, or trace of path within it; a desolate solitude that oppresses the heart, like the spectacle of some great misfortune. Seating ourselves upon a tombstone, we rested, and admired the magnificent panorama that lay spread out before us. Below could be seen Sudludge, Halidgi-Oghli, Hasskioj, Piri-Pashà, a perspective of suburbs closed in by the azure of the sea and the verdure of gardens; to the left the solitary Ok-Meidan, and the hundred minarets of Kassim-Pashà; further on Stamboul, vague and interminable; beyond Stamboul the lofty lines of the Asiatic mountains almost lost in the heavens; in front, on the other side of the Golden Horn, the mysterious quarter of Eyub, of which one by one could be distinguished the rich mausoleums, the marble mosques, the verdant and tree-shaded slopes sprinkled with tombs; the solitary alleys, and the recesses full of sadness and grace; to the right of Eyub other villages mirrored in the water, and finally the last curve of the Golden Horn, losing itself between two high banks clothed with trees and flowers.

Gazing upon this spectacle, tired and almost half asleep, we unconsciously put all the beauty into music, and sang low to ourselves I know not what forgotten tune; we wondered who had been the dead man whose tomb we sat; we poked an ants' nest with a straw, we talked about a hundred foolish

things; and from time to time we asked each other:—Are we really in Constantinople?—then we thought that life is brief and that all is vanity; and then we shivered with delight; but at heart we felt that no beauty of the earth can give a perfect joy if we must contemplate it away from all we love.

The sun was about to set when we descended to the shore and took a four-oared caique; and had hardly given the order—Galata!—when the light boat was already far from land. The caique is certainly the prettiest boat that ever floated on water. It is longer than the gondola, but narrower and more shallow; it is carved and painted and gilded; it has neither rudder nor benches; you are seated upon a carpet, or cushion, so that only your head and shoulders appear above the side; it is pointed at both ends so as to be able to move in either direction; it loses its equilibrium at the slightest movement, and darts from the shore like an arrow from the bow, seeming to skim the water like a swallow; and passing everywhere, it glides and flies, its many colors reflected in the water like a dolphin held in chase. Our two rowers were handsome young Turks, bare armed and legged, with blue shirts, wide white trousers, and red fezes; two bronzed young athletes of twenty, clean, hardy and gay, who sent the boat her own length ahead at every stroke; we passed other caiques so swiftly as scarcely to distinguish them; flocks of ducks went by, and birds flew over our heads; we grazed great covered barges full of veiled women, and here and there the sea-weed covered everything. Seen from the water at that hour the city presented a new aspect. The Asiatic shore was invisible because of the curving roadstead; the hill of the Seraglio closed in the Golden Horn,

making it like a long lake; the hills of the opposing shores seemed gigantic, and Stamboul in the remote distance melting into soft gradations of blue and grey tints, appeared like an enchanted city, lightly floating on the sea and lost in the sky. The caique darted, the two banks fled backward, bay succeeded bay, grove to grove, suburb to suburb; and as we advanced everything seemed to rise and grow larger before us; the colors of the city grew faint, the horizon flamed, the water sent back reflections of purple and gold, and the amazed spectator remained mute and delighted at the wondrous spectacle. When the caique stopped at Galata, one of the boatmen had to yell—*monsù! arrivar!* in our ears, before we wakened from our dream and stepped on shore.

THE GREAT BAZAAR.

AFTER having taken a rapid flight around Constantinople, passing both shores of the Golden Horn, it is time to enter into the heart of Stamboul, and see that universal and perpetual fair, that dark and hidden city full of marvels, treasures, and reminiscences, which extends from the hill of Muri-Osmanie, to that of the Seraskierat, and is called the Great Bazaar.

We start from the mosque of the Sultana Validé. Here perhaps some epicurean reader would wish to stop and give a glance at the Balik-Bazaar, the fish-market, famous in the time of that Andronicus Paleologus, who, as has been recorded, drew from the fisheries along the walls of the city alone, enough to meet the culinary expenses of his entire court. Fish, indeed, is still most abundant at Constantinople, and the Balik-Bazaar in its best days, might offer to the author of the *Ventre de Paris*,* a subject for a pompous and appetizing description, like the great suppers of the old Dutch pictures. The vendors are almost all Turks, and stand ranged around the square, with their fish piled up on mats spread on the ground, or upon long tables, around which a crowd of buyers and an army of dogs, vociferate and yelp. There are to be found the exquisite mullet of the Bosphorus, four times as large as those in our waters; oysters from the island of Marmora, which only Greeks and Armenians know how to broil to a point upon the coals; pilchards

* *The Belly of Paris*, book of that name.

and tunny-fish that are salted almost exclusively by the Jews; anchovies, which the Turks have learned how to prepare from the people of Marseilles; sardines, with which Constantinople provides the Archipelago; the *ulufer*, the most highly flavored fish of the Bosphorus, which is always taken by moonlight; the mackerel of the Black Sea, that makes seven successive invasions into the waters of the city, making a disturbance that is heard far and wide; colossal *isdaurids*, enormous sword fish, turbot, and, as they are called in Turkey, *kalkan-baluk*, or shield-fish, and a thousand smaller fishes, that dart between the two seas, followed by dolphins and *fulcione;* and chased by innumerable halcyons, or king-fishers. Cooks from the kitchens of pashas, old Mussulman *bon-vivants*, slaves, and tavern-keepers, approach the tables, look at the merchandise with a meditative air, make their bargains in monosyllables, and depart with their purchase dangling by a string, grave and taciturn, as if they bore the head of an enemy; at noon the place is empty, and the vendors are all dispersed among the neighboring cafés, where they stay till sunset, dreaming with open eyes, their backs against the wall, and a *narghilé* between their lips.

To reach the great Bazaar, you go through a street that begins at the fish-market, so narrow that the upper stories of the houses almost touch each other, and lined with a double row of low, dark shops, where tobacco is sold, "the fourth column of the canopy of voluptuousness," after coffee, opium, and wine, or "the fourth sofa of enjoyment." Like coffee, it has been fulminated in its time by edicts of the Sultans, and sentences of the muftis, and has been the cause of troubles and punishments that

only rendered it more delicious. The entire street is occupied by tobacco-merchants. The tobacco is displayed in pyramids, or round masses, each one surmounted by a lemon. There is the *latakia* of Antioch, the Seraglio tobacco, bland and fine as the finest silk, tobacco for cigarettes and for the *chibouk*, of all grades of strength and flavor, from that smoked by the gigantic Galata porter, to that in use by the idle *odalisque* of the Imperial kiosk. The *tombeki*, a very strong tobacco that would go to the head of the oldest and most seasoned smoker, if its fumes did not reach the lips purified by the water of the *narghilé*, is kept in closed glass jars, like a medicine. The tobacconists are almost all Greeks or Armenians, of ceremonious manners, affecting lordly airs; the customers stand in groups and chat; here you may see personages from the different ministries, or get an occasional nod from some great man; politics, the last bit of news, the last bit of scandal are discussed; it is a small, private and aristocratic bazaar, which invites to repose, and even in passing, gives forth a breath of the pleasure of talk and smoke.

Going on, you pass under an old archway, festooned with vines, and arrive in front of a vast stone edifice, through which runs a long, straight, covered street, flanked by dark shops, and crowded with people, cases, sacks, and heaps of merchandise. You are met by so strong an odor of drugs and spices, that it almost drives you backwards. It is the Egyptian bazaar wherein are gathered all the Indian, Syrian, Arabian, and Egyptian wares, that afterwards reduced to essences, pastes, powders, and unguents, go to color the faces and figures of the odalisques, to perfume rooms and baths and breaths and beards and dishes, to reinvigorate exhausted pashas, to calm unhappy wives, to stupefy

smokers, to spread dreams, intoxication and forgetfulness over the interminable city. After advancing a few steps you begin to feel your head swim, and retreat; but the sensation of that warm, heavy atmosphere, and those inebriating perfumes, accompanies you into the outer air, and remains vivid in the memory as one of the most powerful and significant impressions of the East.

Coming out from the Egyptian bazaar, the way passes through a street of noisy coppersmiths, Turkish taverns that fill the air with nauseous smells, and a thousand little black holes of shops, where are manufactured quantities of nameless objects, and finally arrives at the Great Bazaar. But long before reaching it you are assailed and have to defend yourself. At a hundred paces from the great entrance gate are stationed the *sensale* or middlemen, like so many bandits, who know a stranger at the first glance, have at once divined that he is coming to the bazaar for the first time, and in general can guess pretty well from what country he comes and in what language to address him. They advance fez in hand and smilingly offer their services. Then follows a dialogue something like this:

"I am not going to buy anything," says the stranger hastily.

"No matter, sir; I only want to show you the bazaar."

"I don't want to see the bazaar."

"But I do not ask to be paid for it."

"I do not desire to have your services for nothing."

"Well, then, I will only accompany you to the end of the street, to give you some information that will be useful when you do come to buy."

"But suppose I do not wish for any information?"

"Then we will talk of other things, sir. Have you come to

Constantinople for the first time? Are you satisfied with your hotel? Have you got a permission to visit the mosques?"

"I tell you that I do not wish to talk. I want to be alone."

"Well, I will leave you alone; I will only follow you ten steps behind."

"Why do you want to follow me?"

"To prevent you from being cheated in the shops."

"Suppose I do not go into the shops?"

"Then, to prevent you from being annoyed in the street." And so you lose your breath, and are obliged to resign yourself to his companionship.

The Great Bazaar has nothing exteriorly to attract the eye, or give an idea of its contents. It is an immense stone edifice, of Byzantine architecture, and irregular form, surrounded by high grey walls, and surmounted by hundreds of little cupolas, covered with lead, and perforated with holes to give light to the interior. The principal entrance is an arched doorway without architectural character; no noise from without penetrates it; at four paces from the door you can still believe that within those fortress walls there is nothing but silence and solitude. But once inside you stand bewildered. It is not an edifice, but a labyrinth of arcaded streets flanked by sculptured columns and pilasters; a real city, with its mosques, fountains, cross-ways and squares, dimly lighted like a thick wood into which no ray of sunlight penetrates; and filled by a dense throng of people. Every street is a bazaar, almost all leading out of one main street, with an arched roof of black and white stone, and decorated with arabesques like the nave of a mosque. In this dimly lighted thoroughfare, carriages, horsemen, and camels are

constantly passing, making a deafening noise. The visitor is apostrophized on all sides with words and signs. The Greek merchants call out in loud voices and use imperious gestures. The Armenian, quite as cunning, but more humble in manner, solicits obsequiously; the Jew whispers his offers in your ear; the silent Turk, seated cross-legged upon his carpet at the entrance of his shop, invites only with his eye, and resigns himself to destiny. Ten voices at once address you; Monsieur! Captain! Caballero! Signore! Eccellenza! Kyrie! My Lord! At every turn, by the side doors, are seen perspectives of arches and pilasters, long corridors, narrow alleys, a long confused perspect of bazaar, and everywhere shops, merchandise piled up or hanging from wall and ceiling, busy merchants, loaded porters, groups of veiled women, coming and going, a perpetual noise of people and things enough to make one dizzy.

The confusion, however, is only apparent. This immense bazaar is ordered like a barrack, and it only needs an hour or two to enable you to know how to find anything you want without a guide. Every kind of goods has its own particular quarter, its street, its corridor, and its square, or *piazetta*. There are a hundred little bazaars contained in one great one, and opening one into the other like the rooms of a vast apartment; and each bazaar is at the same time a museum, a market, and a theatre, where you may look at all without buying anything, take coffee, enjoy the coolness, chatter in ten languages, and make eyes at the prettiest women in the Orient.

You may linger a whole day in one bazaar, unconscious of the flight of time; for example, the bazaar of stuffs, and clothing. It is an emporium of beauty and riches enough to ruin

your eyes, your brains, and your pocket; and you must be on your guard, for a caprice might bring upon you the consequence of sending for help by telegraph. You walk in the midst of towering heaps of brocades from Bagdad, carpets from Caramania, silks from Broussa, linens from Hindustan, muslins from Bengal, shawls from Madras, cachemeres from India and Persia, many tinted tissues from Cairo; cushions arabesqued in gold, silken veils woven with silver stripes, scarfs of gauze in blue and crimson, so light and transparent that they seem like sunset clouds; stuffs of every kind and every design, in which red, blue, green, yellow, colors the most rebellious to sympathetic combination, are brought together and interwoven, with a happy audacity and harmony, that makes one stand in open-mouthed wonder; table-covers of all sizes, with red or white grounds embroidered all over with arabesques, flowers, verses from the Koran, and imperial ciphers, worthy of being admired for hours, like the walls of the Alhambra. Here may be found, one by one, each separate part of the Turkish lady's dress; from the mantle green, orange, or purple, that covers the whole person, down to the silken chemise, the gold-embroidered kerchief, and the satin girdle, on which no eye of man is permitted to fall, save that of the husband or the eunuch. Here are caftans of crimson velvet, bordered with ermine, and covered with stars; corsets of yellow satin, trousers of rose-colored silk, under-vests of white damask embroidered with golden flowers, bride-veils sparkling with silver spangles; green cloth jackets trimmed with swans-down; Greek, Armenian, and Circassian garments, of the oddest shapes, overloaded with ornament, hard and splendid like a cuirass; and with all

this, the prosaic stuffs of France and England, of dull colors, reminding one of a tailor's bill among the verses of a poem. No one who loves a lady can pass through this bazaar without cursing fate that has not made him a millionaire, or without feeling his soul on fire with the fury of sack and pillage.

To get rid of this temptation, one has only to turn into the pipe-bazaar. Here the imagination is led into calmer paths of desire. The eye dwells fondly upon bundles of chibouks, with sticks of cherry, jasmine, maple and rosewood; mouth-pieces of yellow amber from the Baltic, polished and lustrous as crystal, set with rubies and diamonds, and of many shades of color; pipes from Cesaria, their stems bound with threads of silk and gold; tobacco pouches from the Lebanon, lozenged in various colors, and splendidly embroidered in arabesques; narghilés from Bohemia, of steel, silver, and crystal, of beautiful antique shapes, damascened, carved, encrusted with precious stones, with morocco tubes sparkling with golden rings; wrapped in cotton, and perpetually watched by two fixed eyes, that at the approach of any curious looker on, dilate like the eyes of an owl, and stifle on the lip the question as to price; that is of any one who is not at least a vizier, or a pasha who has been governing for a year a province in Asia Minor. Here comes to buy, the messenger from the Sultana, who desires to make a grateful present to the docile Grand-Vizier; or that high dignitary of the court, lately inducted into a new office, and constrained, for the sake of decorum, to spend fifty thousand francs in a rack full of pipes; or one of the Sultan's ambassadors, who desires to carry to some European monarch a splendid memorial of Stamboul. The modest Turk gives a

glance and passes by, paraphrasing for his consolation the sentence of the Prophet;—"The fires of hell shall war like the growl of a camel in the belly of him who *smokes in a pipe of gold or silver.*" From this, one falls again into temptation upon entering the bazaar of perfumery, which is one of the most completely Oriental, and dear to the Prophet, who said:—"Women, children, and perfumes"—naming his three most beloved pleasures. Here are found the famous Seraglio pastilles, for perfuming kisses, the capsules of odoriferous gum which the robust girls of Chio make for the reinforcement of the mouths of the soft Turkish ladies; the exquisite essences of jasmine and bergamot, and that most potent essence of roses, shut in cases of gold-embroidered velvet, and of prices to make your hair stand on end; here is *kohl* for the brows and lashes, antimony for the eyes, henna for the finger tips, soaps that soften the skin of the lovely Syrians, pills that cause the hair to fall from the faces of Circassian men, citron and orange waters, little bags of musk, oil of sandal wood, grey amber, aloes to perfume pipes and coffee cups, a myriad of powders, waters and pomades; of fantastic names and mysterious uses, that each represents an amorous caprice, a purpose of seduction, a refinement of voluptuousness, and that all together, diffuse an acute and sensual fragrance, which invokes a vision of languid eyes and caressing hands, and a suppressed murmur as of sighs and kisses.

These fancies all vanish as you enter the jewellers' bazaar, a dark, deserted alley, flanked by mean looking shops, in which no one would dream what fabulous treasures there lie hid. The jewels are shut up in oaken coffers, bound and plated with iron,

and placed in front of the shops immediately under the eyes of the merchant: old Turks, or old Jews with long beards, whose piercing eyes seem to penetrate to the very bottom of your purse and pocket. Sometimes one of them stands erect in his doorway, and as you pass before him, he first fixes his eye intently upon yours, and then with a rapid gesture holds up before you a diamond from Golconda, or a sapphire from Ormus, or a ruby from Gramschid, and at the slightest negative sign on your part, withdraws it with the same rapidity as he presented it. Others pass by with lingering step, stop you in the middle of the street, and after having cast a suspicious glance around, draw from their breast a dirty rag, and unfolding it, display a fine Brazilian topaz, or a beautiful Macedonian turquoise, looking in your eyes the while with a demoniacal glance of temptation. Others give you a scrutinizing glance, and not judging you worthy, do not deign to offer their precious wares. Not one makes a motion to open the coffer, even if you have the face of a saint, or the air of a Cæsar. The necklaces of opals, the flowers and stars of emeralds, the crescents and diadems set with pearls of Ophir, the dazzling heaps of aquamarines and chrysopaz; of agates, garnets, and *lapis lazuli*, these remain inexorably hidden from the eyes of the impecunious spectator, and more especially from those of an Italian scribbler. The utmost that he may dare is to ask the price of some rosary of amber, coral, or sandal-wood, to run through his fingers in Turkish fashion, and cheat the time in the intervals of his labors.

It is amusing to go into the shops of the Frank merchants where there are things to suit all purses. You have scarcely

entered before you are surrounded by a circle of people sprung from you cannot tell where. It is not possible to deal with one person alone. What with shopkeepers, and their partners, middlemen, and all the hangers on of each, there are always half a dozen. If you escape one, you are sure to fall into the claws of the other; and there is no help for you; and it is incredible, the artfulness, the patience, the obstinacy, the diabolical astuteness which they display in making you buy what they please. They begin by asking an absurd price; you offer one third; they drop their arms in sign of profound discouragement, or strike their foreheads with a gesture of despair, and make no reply; or else they burst into a torrent of passionate words intended to touch your heart. You are a cruel man, you want to make them shut up their shop, you want to reduce them to misery, you have no pity on their children, they cannot understand what they have done to be treated in such a manner. While one is naming the price of an object, a *sensale*, (middleman, or touter) from a neighboring shop, whispers in your ear: —"Do not buy—they are cheating you." You think he is sincere, but he is really playing into the hands of your merchant; he tells you that they are cheating you in the shawl only to gain your confidence, and pick your pocket the next minute by advising you to buy the table-cover or carpet. While you are examining the stuff, they are exchanging signs, winks, and whispers. If you know Greek, they speak Turkish; if you know that, they speak Armenian; if you understand Armenian, they speak Spanish; but in one way or another they are certain to get the better of you. If you are hard to convince, they flatter you; tell you that you speak their language admirably,

that you have the air of a perfect gentleman, and that they never can forget your handsome face; they talk of your country, where they have been; because they have been everywhere; they give you coffee, and offer to accompany you to the custom-house when you leave, to prevent extortion; in reality to cheat you, the custom-house, and your travelling companions, if you have any; they turn the whole shop upside down, and are not at all put out if you buy nothing; if not that day you will buy some other day; you are sure to come to the bazaar and their hunting-dogs will find you out; if you do not fall into their hands, you will fall into those of their associates; if they do not fleece you as merchants, they will skin you as *sensale;* if they do not settle you in the shop, they will finish you at the custom-house; in some way they are sure to have you. To what people do these belong? No one knows. By dint of talking in every language they have lost their primitive accent; by dint of acting comedy all day long, they have changed the physiognomical features of their race; they are of any country they please for the moment, they follow any trade they choose, interpreters, guides, merchants, usurers; and above all things, artists incomparable in the art of cheating the universe.

The Mussulman merchants offer a very different field of observation. Among them are still to be found those old Turks, now rare in the streets of Constantinople, who are like personifications of the times of the Mahomets and Bajazets; the living remains of that old Ottoman edifice that first began to crumble under the reforms of Mahmoud, and that day by day, stone by stone, is falling into ruin and change. Go to the

great bazaar and gaze into the dark depths of the little dark shops in the more distant streets, and there you will find the enormous old turbans of Soliman's time, shaped like the cupola of a mosque; the impassive faces, with glazed eyes, hooked noses, and long white beards; the antique caftans, orange colored and purple, the great trousers of a thousand pletes, bound round the body with immeasurable sashes; the haughty and grave demeanor of the ancient dominating race, their faces dulled by opium, or glowing with a sentiment of ardent religious faith. They are there at the bottom of their dark shops, with folded arms and crossed legs, motionless and grave as images, awaiting in silence the coming of the predestined purchaser. If things go well, they murmur—*Mashallàh!*—Praised be God!—if they go ill—*Olsun!*—so must it be!—and resign themselves to destiny. Some are reading the Koran, others pass between their fingers the beads of their rosaries, listlessly muttering the hundred epithets of Allàh; others, who have completed some good bargain, *drink their narghilé*, as the Turkish expression has it, turning their eyes about slowly with a sleepy, voluptuous look; and still others sit drooping forward, with half-closed eyes, and corrugated brows, as if in profound thought. What are they thinking of? Perhaps of their sons dead under the walls of Sebastopol, or of their caravans dispersed, or of their lost pleasures, or of the gardens of eternity promised by the Prophet, where under the shade of palms and pomegranate trees, they shall espouse the stainless dark-eyed houris.

Every one of them is odd and picturesque in his own way; every shop door is the frame of a picture full of color and fancy,

that fills the mind with stories of adventure and romance. That thin, bronzed man with the bold features, is an Arab, who himself drove from his own distant country, his camels laden with gems and alabaster, and has more than once heard the whistle of the bullets of the desert robbers. This other, in the yellow turban, and with a lordly bearing, has crossed on horseback the solitudes of Syria, bringing silk from Tyre and Sidon. This black statue with his head wrapped in an old Persian shawl, and his forehead seamed with scars, made by the necromancers to save him from death, who holds his head high, as if he still beheld the Colossus of Thebes and the tops of the Pyramids, has come from Nubia. That handsome Moor with pallid face and deep black eyes, wrapped in a snow-white mantle, has brought his carpets from the uttermost western spur of the chain of Atlas. The Turk in the green turban with the attenuated visage has but just returned from the great pilgrimage, where he has seen his friends die of thirst in the interminable plains of Asia Minor, and arriving at Mecca almost dead, dragged himself seven times around the Kaaba, and fell fainting as he covered the Black Stone with ardent kisses. The giant with a white face, arched eyebrows, and fiery eyes, who looks more like a warrior than a merchant, and whose whole being is full of pride and ambition, has brought his furs from the northern regions of the Caucasus, where in his younger days he has struck many a Cossack's head from his shoulders; and this poor wool merchant, with his flat face, and small oblique eyes, muscular and hard as an athlete, it is not long since he said his prayer under the shadow of the immense dome that surmounts the sepulchre of Timour; he started from Samarkand, crossed

the deserts of Bulgaria, passed through herds of Turkomans, crossed the Dead Sea, escaped the bullets of the Circassians, gave thanks to Allah in the Mosque of Trebizond, and came to seek his fortune at Stamboul, whence he will return, an old man, to his beloved Tartary, which he holds ever in his heart.

One of the most splendid bazaars is that for shoes, and it is perhaps the one that is most tempting. There is a double row of glittering shops, making the street look like a royal hall, or like one of those gardens of the Arabian tales, where the trees have golden leaves and flowers of pearl. There are enough slippers to cover all the little feet of all the courts of Asia and Europe. The walls are tapestried with slippers, in velvet, in fur, in brocade, in satin, of the most startling colors and the most capricious form, ornamented with filagree, glittering with tinsel spangles, trimmed with swans-down and ravelled silk, embroidered with flowers in gold and silver, covered with intricate arabesques that hide the material, and sparkling with precious stones. There are shoes for the boatman's wife and for the Sultan's ladies, ranging from five francs to one thousand francs a pair. There is the morocco shoe destined to walk upon the stony ways of Pera, and the slipper that will be shuffled over the carpets of the harem, the patten that will resound upon the marbles of the imperial baths; and exquisite things in white satin and pearls fit only for the bride of the Grand Seigneur. But where are the feet that can get into them? There are some that appear to have been designed for houris or fairies; about as long as a lily leaf, small enough to cause the despair of an Andalusian, and pretty enough to dream about; works of art to keep upon your table; boxes to keep sugar plums and

love letters in. This bazaar is one of the most frequented by foreigners. Young men from Europe are to be seen there, having in their hand a bit of paper containing the measure of the length of some dear French or Italian foot of whose smallness they are proud, and who make gestures of annoyance or despair, when they discover how much it surpasses in length some tiny slipper on which they have set their heart; and others, who asking the price, and hearing a shot, fly without a word. Here also come to purchase, the Mussulman ladies, the *hanums* in great white veils, and now and then one can catch a fragment of their long dialogues with the merchant, some harmonious words of their beautiful language, pronounced in clear, sweet voices that caress the ear like the sound of a musical instrument.

Buni catscia verersia?—How much is this?—*Paballi dir.*—It is too much.—*Ziade veremem.*—I will not pay more. And then a girlish and sonorous laugh that makes one want to pinch their cheeks and chuck them under the chin.

The richest and most picturesque of all is the Bazaar of Arms. It is a real museum, full of treasures, the sight of which carries the imagination into the regions of legendary story and excites an indescribable sentiment of wonder and dismay. All the strongest, most frightful, and cruelest weapons that have ever been brandished in defence of Islam, from Mecca to the Danube, are there, bright and sharp, as if they had but just left the hands of the fierce fanatical soldiery of Mahomet or Selim; and one can almost see glittering among them the blood-shot, fiery eyes of those formidable Sultans, those ferocious janissaries, fearless and pitiless, who scattered blood and fire over

Asia Minor and Europe. There are to be found those famous scimetars that could sever a feather in the air, and slice off the ears of an insolent ambassador; those formidable *cangiars* that at one blow could split a man from head to heart; those maces that have crushed Servian and Hungarian helmets; yataghans with handles of carved ivory, incrusted with amethysts and rubies, on whose blades can still be seen graven the number of the heads they have served to cut off; daggers with silver, velvet, and satin sheaths, and handles of agate and ivory, set with garnets, coral, and turquoises, inscribed with verses from the Koran in letters of gold, and with curved and contorted blades that look as if they were searching for a heart. Who knows but that in this terrible armory there does not lurk the scimetar of Orcano, or the wooden sabre with which the powerful arm of Abd-el-Murad, the warrior dervise, sheared off a head at one blow; or the famous yataghan that Sultan Moussa used when he clove Hassan from his shoulder to his waist; or the enormous sabre of that Bulgarian giant who planted the first ladder against the wall of Constantinople; or the mace with which Mahomet the Second struck dead the rapacious soldier under the dome of Saint Sophia; or the great Damascus blade that served Iskandu Beg when he cut Feronz-Pashà in two below the walls of Stetigrad? The most slashing blows and the most horrible deaths in all Ottoman history rise before the imagination, and one seems to see those weapons still dripping with blood, and imagine that the old Turks in the shops have no doubt gathered up arms and corpses upon the very field of the struggle, and now keep the skeletons hidden in some dark corner. Among the arms may be seen also those great saddles of

blue and crimson velvet, embroidered with stars and crescents in gold and pearls, with plumed frontals, and inlaid silver bits, and bronzings splendid as royal mantles; things out of the "Arabian Nights" made for the entrance of a king of the genii into a city of dreams. Above these treasures are suspended ancient muskets with flint and wheel, great Albanian pistols, long Arab guns, worked like jewels, antique shields of tortoise shell and hippopotamus hide, Circassian mail, Cossack targes, Mongol helmets, Turcoman bows, creatimers knives, horrid blades of sinister forms, every one of which seems the revelation of a crime, and makes one think of the contortions of the death agony. In the midst of all this threatening and magnificent array sit cross-legged the most unadulterated Turks in all the Great Bazaar, for the most part old, of a dreary aspect, lean as anchorites and haughty as Sultans, figures of a past age, dressed in the fashion of the first Hegira, looking as if they had been resuscitated and called from the sepulchre to reclaim their unworthy descendants back to the austerity of the antique race.

Another bazaar to be seen is the old clothes bazaar. Here Rembrandt would have elected his domicile and Goya would have spent his last *peceta*. Who has not seen an Eastern old-clothes shop can never imagine what extravagance of rags, what pomp of color, what irony of contrast, what a spectacle at once dreary, filthy, and carnivalesque is presented by the bazaar, this common sewer of rags, in which all the refuse of harems, barracks, courts, theatres, come to await the caprice of a painter, or the need of a mender of old clothes to drag them to the light of day. From long poles inserted in the walls dangle old Turkish uniforms, swallow-tailed jackets, lordly dol-

mans, tunics of dervises, Bedouin cloaks, all in rags and fringes and tatters, looking as if they had been pierced by a thousand poniards, and reminding one of the sinister spoils that are to be seen upon the tables of the assize courts. Among these rags glitter here and there a bit of gold embroidery, and old silken girdles, turbans loosed from their folds, rich shawls in tatters, velvet bodices whence the pearls have been stripped perhaps by the hand of a robber, drawers and veils that may have belonged to some faithless beauty who now sleeps in a sack at the bottom of the Bosphorus, and other women's garments of delicate colors and texture, hung among coarse Circassian caftans, long, black Jewish gowns, and rusty cassocks, that may have once hidden the bandit's gun, or the cut-throat's dagger. Towards evening, in the mysterious light that falls from the holes pierced in the vaulted ceiling, all these pendent garments take on the appearance of bodies of hanged people; and when in the darkness behind, you detect the glittering eyes of some old Jew, scratching his forehead with his crooked fingers, you think, there is the hand that tightened the cords, and you give a glance to see if the outer door is open.

One day is not sufficient if you wish to see all the ins and outs of this strange place. There is the fez bazaar, where are sold fezes from every country, from Morocco to Vienna, ornamented with inscriptions from the Koran that keep off evil spirits; the fez which the beautiful Greek wears upon the top of her head, above the knot of her black tresses braided with coins; the red skull cap of the Turkish women; soldiers', generals', Sultans', dandies' fezes of all shades of red and of all shapes, from those of the earliest primitive time up to the large and

elegant fez of Sultan Mahmoud, emblem of reforms, and the abomination of all old Mussulmans. There is the fur bazaar, where can be found the sacred skin of the black fox, which once could only be worn by the Sultan and his Grand Vizier; marten fur, with which the richest caftans are lined; white bear and black bear, blue fox, astrakan, ermine, and ribelline in which the Sultans used to spend fabulous sums. Then there is the cutlers' bazaar, which should be visited, if only to see and handle a pair of those enormous Turkish scissors, whose bronzed and gilded blades, adorned with fantastic designs of birds and flowers, cross each other in the most ferocious manner, leaving a space into which might be thrust the head of a malignant critic. There is the bazaar of the gold-thread makers, that of the embroiderers, and many others, all different in form and gradations of light, but all alike in one respect, that no woman is ever seen to be at work in any one of them. The nearest approach to it is perhaps some Greek woman, who, seated for a moment before a tailor's counter, timidly offers you a handkerchief which she has just finished embroidering. Oriental jealousy interdicts shop-keeping to the fair sex, as a school for coquetry and intrigue.

But there are still other parts of the Great Bazaar where a stranger can not venture, unaccompanied by a merchant or a *sensale;* and these are the interior portions of the small quarters into which this singular city is divided, little islands about which run the crowded streets. If it is difficult not to lose one's-self in the street, it is impossible in these places. From corridors but little wider than a man and so low that you can scarce walk upright, you grope your way down some wooden steps,

pass through other courts lighted by lanterns, descend below the surface of the ground, emerge again into daylight, walk with bent head through long winding passages, under damp vaults, between black walls and dirty wooden partitions, which lead to secret doors by which you find yourself unexpectedly at the point whence you started; and everywhere you see shadows coming and going, motionless spectral figures standing in corners, people moving merchandise or counting money; lights appear and disappear, voices and hurried steps resound from you know not where; black objects obstruct your path, strange gleams of light, and unknown odors assail your senses, until you feel as if you were wandering in some enchanted cavern, and were doomed to wander there forever.

In general the *sensale* take strangers through these places in order to conduct them to those out of the way shops where a little of everything is sold; a kind of grand bazaar in miniature, a sort of superior second-hand shops, very curious to see, but most perilous for the purse, for they contain such rare and curious things that avarice incarnate can not resist them. These merchants in a little of every thing, passed rascals and cheats, be it understood, and polyglot like all their kind, have a certain dramatic way of carrying on their temptations that is most amusing, and rarely fails in its purpose. Their shops are almost all small and dark, and full of presses and cases; lights are always burning in them, and there is scarcely room enough to stand. After having shown you some small matter in carved ivory and mother-of-pearl, some Chinese cup, or Japanese vase, the merchant says that he has something specially for you, and draws forth a casket whence he turns out upon the table a

quantity of objects; a fan of peacocks' feathers, a bracelet of old Turkish coins, a little camels' hair cushion with the Sultan's cipher embroidered in gold, a little Persian mirror painted with scenes from the *book of paradise;* a tortoise shell spoon with which the Turks eat preserved cherries; an old ribbon of the order of the Osmanli. There is nothing here that pleases you? He opens another casket, and this time there is no doubt that it is for you only. There is a broken elephant's tusk, a Trebizond bracelet that looks as if it were made out of a tress of silver hair, a little Japanese idol, a sandal wood comb from Mecca, a large Turkish spoon carved in open work and inlaid, an antique narghilé in silver gilt, with an inscription, bits of mosaic from Saint Sophia, a heron's plume that has ornamented the turban of Selim, third of that name, the merchant gives his word of honor for the fact. Is there nothing here that tempts you? He opens another casket, and pulls out an ostrich egg from Sennahar, a Persian ink-horn, a damascened ring, a Mingrelian bow, with its quiver of elk-skin, a Circassian double-pointed cap, a jasper rosary, a perfume burner of enamelled gold, a Turkish talisman, a camel driver's knife, a bottle of attar of roses—do you find nothing yet, in Heaven's name? Do you not want to make a present? Have you no thought for your relations? No remembrance of your friends? But perhaps you have a passion for stuffs and carpets, and in these also you can be served in a friendly way. Here, Milord, is a striped mantle from Kurdistan; here is a lion's skin, here is a carpet from Aleppo with steel nails, here is a carpet of Casa-blanca, three fingers thick, that will last for four generations, guaranteed; here, your excellency, are old

cushions, old brocaded sashes, and old silken coverlets, a little frayed and moth eaten, but embroidered in a way that can not be done now, not even if you were to pay a fortune for it. You, *Cabellero,* who have been brought here by a friend, *you* shall have this sash for five napoleons, and I shall have the means for eating bread and garlic for a week.

If you are staunch against this temptation, he will whisper in your ear that he can sell you the very cord with which the terrible mutes of the Seraglio strangled Nassuh Pasha, the Grand Vizier of Mahmoud Third; if you laugh in his face and say you can not swallow that, he will drop it like a man of spirit, and will make one final attempt upon your purse, by throwing down before you a horse's tail, like those that are carried before and behind a pasha; or a janissary's helmet, carried off by his father, all stained with blood, on the very day of the famous massacre; or a piece of flag from the Crimea, with the crescent and silver stars; or an agate wash basin; or a brazier in carved copper; or a dromedary's collar hung with shells and bells; or a eunuch's whip of hippopotamus hide, or a Koran bound in gold, or a scarf from Korassan, or a pair of slippers from Kalina, or a candle-stick made from an eagle's talon, until at last your fancy all on fire, you feel a wild desire to throw down purse, watch, studs, and sleeve buttons, and cry out—give, give! and one must indeed be a father of wisdom to resist. How many artists have come out of this place as bare as Job and how many rich men have made a hole in their patrimony!

But before the great bazaar closes, we must take one more turn about it, and see it in its latest hour. The movement of the crowd is more hurried, the merchants call out more impera-

tively, Greeks and Armenians run about with shawls and carpets over their arms, crying their wares; groups form, dissolve, and re-form further on; horses, carriages, and beasts of burthen pass in a long file towards the entrance doors. In that hour, all the merchants with whom you have bargained without coming to an agreement, flit about you in the twilight like bats; they peep at you from behind columns, and cross your path at every turn, in order to remind you by their presence of that stuff, or that jewel, and renew your fancy for it. Sometimes you have a train behind you; if you stop, they stop, if you turn, they turn, and if you look back you meet the glance of twenty fixed dilated eyes that seem to devour you alive. But the light wanes, and the crowd is thinning; under the long vaulted roofs resounds the voice of some invisible muezzin, announcing the close of day; some Turks spread their carpets and murmur their evening prayer before their shops; others make their ablutions at the fountains. Already the old centenarians of the Bazaar of Arms have closed the great iron doors; the smaller bazaars are deserted, the corridors are lost in darkness, the openings of streets look like caverns, camels come upon you unheard, the voices of the water-venders die away under the arches, the Turks hasten their steps, strangers depart, the shutters are closed, the day is over.

And now I hear the inquiry on all sides: "But what about Saint Sophia? and the old Seraglio? and the palaces of the Sultan? and the Castle of Seven Towers? and Abdul-Aziz? and the Bosphorus?" I will describe all in turn and with all my heart; but first, I must be allowed to wander still freely about Constantinople, changing my argument at every page, as then, I changed my thought at every step.

THE LIGHT.

AND first of all, the light! One of my dearest delights at Constantinople was to see the sun rise and set, standing upon the bridge of the Sultana Validé. At dawn, in autumn, the Golden Horn is almost always covered by a light fog, behind which the city is seen vaguely, like those gauze curtains that descend upon the stage to conceal the preparations for a scenic spectacle. Scutari is quite hidden; nothing is to be seen but the dark uncertain outline of her hills. The bridge and the shores are deserted, Constantinople sleeps; the solitude and silence render the spectacle more solemn. The sky begins to grow golden behind the hills of Scutari. Upon that luminous strip are drawn, one by one, black and clear, the tops of the cypress trees in the vast cemetery, like an army of giants ranged upon the heights; and from one cape of the Golden Horn to the other, there shines a tremulous light, faint as the first murmur of the awakening city. Then behind the cypresses of the Asiatic shore comes forth an eye of fire, and suddenly the white tops of the four minarets of Saint Sophia are tinted with deep rose. In a few minutes, from hill to hill, from mosque to mosque, down to the end of the Golden Horn, all the minarets, one after the other, turn rose color, all the domes, one by one are silvered, the flush descends from terrace to terrace, the tremulous light spreads, the great veil melts, and all

Stamboul appears, rosy and resplendent upon her heights, blue and violet along the shores, fresh and young, as if just risen from the waters. As the sun rises the delicacy of the first tints vanishes in an immense illumination, and everything remains bathed in white light until towards evening. Then the divine spectacle begins again. The air is so limpid that from Galata one can see clearly every distant tree, as far as Kadi-Kioi. The whole of the immense profile of Stamboul stands out against the sky with such a clearness of line and color, that every minaret, obelisk, and cypress tree can be counted one by one from Seraglio Point to the cemetery of Eyoub. The Golden Horn and the Bosphorus assume a wonderful ultramarine color; the heavens, the color of amethyst in the East, are on fire behind Stamboul, tinting the horizon with infinite lights of rose and carbuncle that make one think of the first day of the creation; Stamboul darkens, Galata becomes golden, and Scutari, struck by the last rays of the setting sun, with every pane of glass giving back the glow, looks like a city on fire. And this is the moment to contemplate Constantinople. There is one rapid succession of the softest tints, pallid gold, rose and lilac, which quiver and float over the sides of the hills and the water, every moment giving and taking away the prize of beauty from each part of the city, and revealing a thousand modest graces of the landscape that have not dared to show themselves in the full light. Great melancholy suburbs are lost in the shadow of the valleys; little purple cities smile upon the heights; villages faint as if about to die; others die at once like extinguished flames; trees, that seemed already dead, revive, and glow, and quiver for a moment longer under the last

ray of the sun. Then there is nothing left but two resplendent points upon the Asiatic shore; the summit of Mount Bulgurlu, and the extremity of the cape that guards the entrance to the Propontis; they are at first two golden crowns, then two purple caps, then two rubies; then all Constantinople is in shadow, and ten thousand voices from ten thousand minarets announce the close of day.

BIRDS.

CONSTANTINOPLE has one grace and gayety peculiar to itself, that comes from an infinite number of birds of every kind, for which the Turks nourish a warm sentiment of sympathy and regard. Mosques, groves, old walls, gardens, palaces, all resound with the song, the whistling and twittering of birds; everywhere wings are fluttering, and life and harmony abound. The sparrows enter the houses boldly and eat out of women's and children's hands; swallows nest over the cafè doors, and under the arches of the bazaars; pigeons in innumerable swarms, maintained by legacies from Sultans and private individuals, form garlands of black and white along the cornices of the cupolas and around the terraces of the minarets; sea-gulls dart and play over the water, thousands of turtle-doves coo amorously among the cypresses in the cemeteries; crows croak about the Castle of the Seven Towers; halcyons come and go in long files between the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmora; and storks sit upon the cupolas of the mausoleums. For the Turk, each one of these birds has a gentle meaning, or a benignant virtue; turtle-doves are favorable to lovers, swallows keep away fire from the roofs where they build their nests, storks make yearly pilgrimages to Mecca, halcyons carry the souls of the faithful to Paradise. Thus he protects and feeds

them, through a sentiment of gratitude and piety, and they enliven the house, the sea, and the sepulchre. Every quarter of Stamboul is full of the noise of them, bringing to the city a sense of the pleasures of country life, and continually refreshing the soul with a reminder of nature.

MEMORIALS.

In no other city in Europe do places and legendary or historical monuments excite the fancy as in Stamboul, for, in no other city do they record events so recent and yet so fantastic. Anywhere else, to find the poetry of memory, one must go back some centuries, but at Stamboul a few years will suffice. Legend, or that which has the nature and efficacy of legend, is of yesterday. It is but a few years since the fabulous hecatomb of the Janissaries was consumed in the Et-Meidan; but a few years since the twenty sacks containing Mustafa's beauties were thrown up on the shores of the Sea of Marmora; since the family of Brancovano were destroyed in the castle of the Seven Towers; since two *capige-basci*, held European ambassadors by both arms in the presence of the Grand Seigneur, only the half of whose face was displayed, illuminated by a mysterious light; and since there ceased behind the walls of the Old Seraglio that strange life, so mingled with love, horror, and madness, that it already seems centuries distant. Wandering about Stamboul with these thoughts, one is conscious of a feeling of astonishment at seeing the city so tranquil, and smiling with all its color and verdure. Ah! traitress! you exclaim, what have you done with those mountains of severed heads, and those lakes of blood? Is it possible that it is all so well hidden, cleansed, washed, that no trace remains? On the Bosphorus, opposite

the tower of Leander, that rises, a monument of love, from the water, under the walls of the Seraglio gardens, may still be seen the inclined plane by which faithless odalisques were rolled into the sea; in the Et-Meidan the serpentine column in the midst still bears the mark of the famous sabre-stroke of Mahomet the Conqueror; on the bridge of Mahmoud is still shown the spot where the fiery Sultan struck dead the audacious dervish, who hurled an anathema in his face; in the cistern of the ancient church of Baluk'li, still swim the miraculous fish that predicted the fall of the city of the Paleologhi; under the trees of the Sweet Waters of Asia are pointed out the recesses where a dissolute Sultana bestowed upon the favorites of a moment the love that ended in death. Every door, every tower, every mosque, every square, recalls some prodigy, or some carnage, some love, or mystery, or prowess of a Padishah, or caprice of a Sultana, every place has its legend, and all the surroundings, the distant prospect, the air, and the silence, concur to bear away the imagination from the life of the present, and plunge it into the past, until the idea of going back to one's hotel seems incongruous and strange, that one is tempted to exclaim—What! —is there such a thing as a hotel?

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RESEMBLANCES.

In the first days, fresh as I was from the perusal of Oriental literature, I saw everywhere the famous personages of history and legend, and the figures that recalled them resembled sometimes so faithfully those that were fixed in my imagination, that I was constrained to stop and look at them. How many times have I seized my friend by the arm, and pointing to a person passing by, have exclaimed,—"It is he, *Cospetto!* do you not recognize him?" In the square of the Sultana Validé, I frequently saw the gigantic Turk who threw down millstones from the walls of Nicæa, on the heads of the soldiers of Baglione; I saw in front of a mosque Umm Dgiemil, that old fury that sowed brambles and nettles before Mahomet's house; I met in the book bazaar, with a volume under his arm, Digiemal-eddin, the learned man of Broussa, who knew the whole of the Arab dictionary by heart; I passed quite close to the side of Ayesha, the favorite wife of the Prophet, and she fixed upon my face her eyes, brilliant and humid *like the reflection of stars in a well;* I have recognized in the Et-Meidan, the famous beauty of that poor Greek woman, killed by a cannon ball at the base of the serpentine column; I have been face to face in the Fanar, with Kara-Abderrahman, the handsomest young Turk of the time of Orkana; I have seen Coswa, the she-camel of the Prophet; I have encountered *Kara-bulut,* Selim's black steed; I have met

the poor poet Fignahi, condemned to go about Stamboul tied to an ass, for having pierced with an insolent distich the Grand Vizier of Ibrahim ; I have been in the same café with Soliman the Big, the monstrous admiral, whom four robust slaves hardly succeeded in lifting from his divan ; Ali, the Grand Vizier, who could not find in all Arabia a horse that could carry him ; Mahmoud Pasha, the ferocious Hercules that strangled the son of Soliman ; and the stupid Ahmed Second, who continually repeated, *Koso ! Koso !*—very well, very well—crouching before the door of the copyists' bazaar in the square of Bajazet. All the personages of the Thousand and One Nights, the Aladdins, the Zobeides, the Sindbads, the Gulnares, the old Jewish merchants, possessors of enchanted carpets and wonderful lamps, passed before me like a procession of phantoms.

COSTUME.

THIS is really the period wherein to see the Mussulman population of Constantinople to the best advantage, because in the last century they were too uniform, and in the next they will probably be the same. Now we catch them in the act of transformation, and thus they present an extraordinary variety. The progress of the reformers, the resistance of the old Turks, and the uncertainty and hesitations of the great mass that undulates between the two extremities, all the phases, in short, of the struggle between old and young Turkey, are faithfully represented in the variety of costume. The inflexible old Turk still wears the turban, the caftan, and the traditional slippers of yellow morocco; and the more obstinate the man, the bigger his turban. The reforming Turk wears a long black frock coat buttoned to the chin, trousers with straps, and nothing Turkish but the fez. The more youthful among them, however, have already thrown aside the black frock, and wear cut-away coats, light pantaloons, elegant cravats, watch chains and seals, and a flower in the button hole. Between these and those, the caftan wearers, and the frock coats, there is an abyss; there is nothing in common but the name; they are two entirely different peoples. The turbaned Turk firmly believes in the bridge Sirat over the infernal regions, finer than a hair, and sharper than a scimetar; he makes his ablutions at the proper hours, and goes

home at sunset. The Turk of the black frock coat laughs at the Prophet, gets himself photographed, speaks French, and passes his evening at the theatre. Between them both there is the waverer, who still wears the turban, but very small, so that he could exchange it for a fez without scandal; some wear the caftan, but have already inaugurated the fez; others wear the ancient costume, but without sash, slippers, or brilliant colors; and little by little they will get rid of the rest. The women only preserve the veil and mantle that hide the form; but the veil has become transparent, and sometimes shows a plumed hat underneath, and the mantle often covers a gown cut after a Parisian model. Every year sees the fall of thousands of caftans, and the rise of thousands of frock coats; every day dies an old Turk, and a reformed Turk is born. Newspapers succeed to the rosary, cigars to the chibouk, wine takes the place of water; the coach displaces the *araba;* French grammar is studied instead of Arabian grammar; pianofortes and stone houses succeed to the *timbur*, and the house of wood. Everything is changing, and being transformed. Perhaps in less than a century we must seek for the remains of old Turkey at the bottom of the more distant provinces of Asia Minor, as we now find old Spain only in the most remote villages of Andalusia.

THE FUTURE CONSTANTINOPLE.

THIS thought assailed me often as I contemplated Constantinople from the bridge of the Sultana Validé. What will this city have become after one or two centuries, even if the Turks are not driven out of Europe? The great holocaust of beauty to expediency will have been consummated. I see her, the Constantinople of the future, that London of the East that will sit in sad and threatening majesty upon the ruins of the most lovely and smiling of cities. The hills will be levelled, the groves cut down, the many colored houses cleared away; the horizon will be cut on every side by the long, rigid lines of palaces, factories, and store-houses, in the midst of which will run myriads of straight streets, flanked by tall shops and pyramidal roofs and steeples. Long, wide avenues will divide Stamboul into ten thousand enormous blocks; telegraph wires will cross each other like an immense spider web, above the roofs of the noisy city; on the bridge of the Sultana Validé, will flow all day long a black torrent of stove-pipe hats and caps; the mysterious hill of the Seraglio will be a zoölogical garden; the castle of the Seven Towers a penitentiary, the Ebdomon a museum of natural history; the whole will be solid, geometrical, useful, grey and ugly, and a great dark cloud will forever veil the skies of Thrace, towards which will rise no more ardent prayers, no more eyes enamored of the songs of poets. When this image

rises before me, I feel an oppression of the heart; but then I console myself thinking:—who knows but in the twenty-first century, some Italian bride, making her wedding journey here, may not exclaim sometimes:—What a pity! Pity that Constantinople is no longer such as it was when described by that old worm-eaten book of the nineteenth century, that I once found in my grandmother's closet!

THE DOGS OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

CONSTANTINOPLE is an immense dog kennel; every one makes the remark as soon as he arrives. The dogs constitute a second population of the city, less numerous, but not less strange than the first. Everybody knows how the Turks love them and protect them. I do not know if it is because the sentiment of charity toward all creatures is recommended in the Koran, or because, like certain birds, the dogs are believed to be bringers of good fortune, or because the Prophet loved them, or because the sacred books speak of them, or because as some pretend, Mahomet the Victorious brought in his train a numerous staff of dogs, who entered triumphantly with him through the breach in the San Romano gate. The fact is that they are highly esteemed, that many Turks leave sums for their support in their wills, and that when Sultan Abdul Medjid had them all carried to the Island of Marmora, the people murmured, and when they were brought back, they were received with rejoicings, and the government not to provoke ill-humor, has left them ever since in peace. Since, however, according to the Koran, the dog is an unclean animal, and every Turk believes that he would contaminate his house by sheltering one under his roof, it follows that not one of the innumerable dogs of Constantinople has a master. They therefore form a great free vagabond republic, collarless, nameless, houseless, and

lawless. The street is their abode, there they dig little dens, where they sleep, eat, are born, brought up, and die; and no one, at least at Stamboul, ever thinks of disturbing their occupations or their repose. They are masters of the public highways. In our cities it is the dog that makes way for the horseman, or foot passenger. There it is the people, the horses, the camels, the donkeys, that make way for the dogs. In the most frequented parts of Stamboul four or five dogs, curled up asleep in the middle of the road, will cause the entire population of a quarter to turn out of the way for half a day. It is the same in Galata and Pera, but here they are left in peace, not out of respect for them, but because they are so many that it would be a hopeless and endless task, to attempt to drive them away from under the feet of the passenger.

They are with difficulty disturbed even when in the crowded street a carriage with four horses is seen coming like the wind. Then, and at the very last moment, they rise and transport their lazy bones a foot or two out of the way—just enough and no more to save their lives. Laziness is the distinctive trait of the dogs of Constantinople. They lie down in the middle of the road, five, six, ten in a line, or in a ring, curled up so that they look more like tow mats than beasts, and there they sleep the whole day through, among throngs of people, coming and going, with the most deafening noises, and neither cold, nor heat, nor rain nor shine can move them. When it snows they stay under the snow; when it rains they lie in the mud up to their ears, so that when at length they rise they look like sketches of animals in clay, and there are neither eyes, ears, nor nose to be seen.

At Pera and Galata, however, they are less indolent, because it is not so easy to find food. At Stamboul they are boarding, but at Pera and Galata they find their own provisions. They are the scavengers, the living brooms of the street, what the swine reject is welcome to them. Except the stones, they eat everything, and having hardly sufficient to keep death at bay, curl up and sleep until the pangs of famine wake them. They sleep almost always in the same spots.

The canine population of Constantinople is divided into quarters or wards. Every quarter, every street is inhabited or rather possessed by a certain number of dogs who never go away from it, and never allow strangers to reside in it. They exercise a sort of service of police. They have their guards, their advanced posts, their sentinels; they go the rounds, and make explorations. Woe to any dog of another quarter who, pushed by hunger, shall risk himself within the territory of his neighbors! A crowd of curs fall upon him at once, and if they catch him, it is all over with him; if they cannot catch him, they chase him furiously as far as his own domain; that is, to the confines of it, for the enemy's country is ever feared and respected. No words can give an idea of the fury of the engagements that take place about a bone, about a fair one, or about a violation of territory. Every moment may be seen a crowd of dogs, entangled in an intricate and confused mass, disappearing in a cloud of dust, and giving forth such barkings and yelpings as would pierce the ears of a man born deaf; then the crowd disperses—and through the dust appear the victims stretched here and there upon the field of battle. Love, jealousy, duels, blood, broken legs and lacerated ears are the

incidents of every hour. Sometimes bands of them assemble and make such a disturbance in front of some shop, that the shopkeeper and his boys are constrained to arm themselves with sticks and benches and make a military sortie to clear the street, and then heads may be heard to crack, and spines to resound, and the air is full of the most unearthly noises.

At Pera and Galata especially, the poor beasts are so ill-treated, so accustomed to feel a blow whenever they see a stick, that the mere sound of an umbrella, or cane upon the stones sends them flying; and even when they seem asleep, there is always one ear open, one half closed eye with which they follow for a long distance the movements of a suspicious stick; and so little accustomed are they to kindly human notice that it is enough to caress one in passing, and ten others will run and jump about you, wagging their tails, whining, with eyes shining with joy and gratitude.

The condition of a dog at Pera and Galata is acknowledged to be worse than that of a spider in Holland, which all the world knows to be one of the most persecuted creatures in the animal kingdom.

Beholding them, one cannot but believe that they have their recompense after death. Even they, like everything else at Constantinople, called up some historical reminiscence; but it was a bitterly ironical one; it was the famous hunting pack of Bajazet, that scoured the imperial forests of Olympus, in crimson housings and jewelled collars; what a change in social position! This unhappy fate depends also in part upon their ugliness. They are almost all of the mastiff, or wolf-dog race, and they have a mingled look of wolf and fox; or rather they

resemble nothing, but are the horrible product of fortuitous crossings, spotted with strange colors, about the size of the so-called butcher's dog, and so lean that we can count their ribs at twenty paces.

The greater part of them are reduced by continual battles, into such a condition that if they were not seen to walk, they might be taken for carcasses of dogs, with broken tails, with torn ears, with hairless spines and scarred necks, one-eyed, lame of two legs, covered with sores, and devoured by flies, reduced to the last condition to which a dog can be reduced and live, they are real relics of war and hunger and disease. As for the tail, it may be said to be an immense luxury, for it is rare for a Constantinople dog to wear his tail entire for more than two months of public life. Poor beasts! They would inspire a heart of stone with compassion. There are some among them, so lopped and gnawed, and in the strangest ways, they walk with such a languid waddle, with such grotesque totterings, that it is impossible to forbear a smile, and famine, war and sticks, are not their only or their worst enemies. A cruel custom has lately invaded Galata and Pera.

Often in the night the peaceful citizens are awakened by the most diabolical noises; and looking from the window they behold a crowd of dogs leaping high in the air, whirling round and round, and beating their heads furiously against the walls, and in the morning the ground is strewn with corpses.

The doctor and apothecary of the quarter, having the habit of studying at night, and wishing to procure a week of quiet, have been distributing a little poison. These and other reasons cause a continual diminution in the number of dogs at Pera and

Galata, but to little purpose, since at Stamboul they increase and multiply, until, finding no more aliment in the Turkish city, they emigrate to the other shore and fill with their innumerable progeny, the gaps made in the ranks by battle, famine and poison.

THE EUNUCHS.

BUT there are other beings at Constantinople who excite more compassion than the dogs, and they are the eunuchs, who, as they were introduced among the Turks, despite the formal precepts of the Koran, that condemns the infamous degradation of nature, still subsist, notwithstanding the recent laws which prohibit the traffic, since avidity for gold, and selfishness are stronger than the law. These unfortunates are to be met at every step in the streets, as they are found on every page of history. In the background of every event in the history of Turkey stands one of these sinister figures, with a list of conspirators in his hand; covered with gold, and stained with blood, victim, favorite or executioner, openly or secretly formidable, upright like a spectre in the shadow of the throne, or dimly seen in the opening of a mysterious door. So now in Constantinople, in the midst of the busy crowd, in the bazaars, among the merry multitude at the Sweet Waters, under the arches of the mosques, beside carriages, in the steamers and caiques, at all feasts, in all crowds, is seen this semblance of a man, this doleful figure, whose presence makes a dark, lugubrious stain upon the smiling aspect of Oriental life. Their political importance has diminished with the omnipotence of the court, and as Oriental jealousy relaxes, their consequence in private houses has also much declined; it is difficult for them now to find in

riches and domination, a compensation for their misfortune; no Ghaznefer Agà could now be found to consent to mutilation in order to be made chief of the white eunuchs; they are all in these days most certainly victims, and victims without hope of redress; bought or stolen as children in Abyssinia or in Syria, about one in three survives the infamous knife, and he is sold in defiance of the law, with a hypocrisy of secrecy more odious than an open market. They do not need to be pointed out, they are easily recognized. Almost all are tall, fat and flabby, with beardless, withered faces, short bodied, and long in the legs and arms. They wear the scarlet fez, a long dark frock coat and European trousers, and they carry a whip of hippopotamus hide, which is their insignia of office. They walk with long soft steps like big children. They accompany the ladies on foot or on horseback, either before or behind the carriage, sometimes one, sometimes two together, and keep a vigilant eye about them, which at the least irreverent look or action in the passer by, assumes an expression of ferocious anger. Except in such a case, their faces are absolutely void of expression, or else it is one of infinite weariness and depression. I do not remember ever to have seen one smile. There are some very young ones that look fifty years old, and some old ones that seem youths fallen into decrepitude in a day.

There are many so round, soft, fat, and shining, that they look like fattened swine; all are dressed in fine cloth, and perfumed like vain young dandies. There are heartless men who can pass these unfortunate beings with a laugh. Perhaps they think that having been such from childhood they do not comprehend their own wretchedness. On the contrary, it is known

that they do understand and feel it; and even if it were not known, how could it be doubted? They belong to no sex, they are but shows of men; they live in the midst of men and see themselves separated by an abyss; they feel life beating about them like a sea and must stand in it, motionless and solitary as a rock; their thoughts and feelings are strangled by an iron circlet that no human force can break; they have forever before them an image of felicity, toward which all things tend, around which all things move, by which all things are colored and illuminated, and they feel themselves immeasurably distant, in darkness, in a great, cold void, like creatures accursed of God. To be, besides custodians of that felicity, barriers which jealous men plant between their pleasures and the world, bolts on the door, rags to hide the treasure; and to live among perfumes and seductions, youth, beauty, and gladness, with shame upon their foreheads, rage in their souls, despised, sneered at, without name, without family, without a record of affection, apart from humanity and nature, ah! it must be a torment such as the human mind cannot conceive, like living with a dagger fixed in the heart.

And this infamy is still allowed; these unhappy wretches walk about the streets of a European city, live in the midst of men, and do not howl, or bite, or kill, or spit in the faces of that coward humanity that can look upon them without blushing or weeping, and that forms associations for the protection of dogs and cats! Their lives are one continual torture. When their mistresses do not find them helpful in their intrigues they hate them as spies and jailors, and torment them with cruel coquetries that drive them mad with fury, like the

poor eunuch in the *Lettres Persanes*. Everything is sarcasm for them; they bear the names of flowers and perfumes, in allusion to the ladies whose custodians they are: they are *possessors of the hyacinths, guardians of the lilies, custodians of the roses and violets*, and sometimes, the miserable wretches fall in love! because in them the passions are not eradicated; and they are jealous and weep tears of blood; and often lose their reason altogether and strike. In the time of the Crimean war, a eunuch struck a French officer across the face with his whip, and the latter cut him down with his sabre. Who can say what sufferings are theirs at the sight of smiles, and beauty, or how often their hands grasp the hilt of the dagger. It is no wonder that in the immense void of their hearts there is room for the cold passions of hatred, revenge, and ambition; that they grow up acrid, biting, envious, cowardly, ferocious; that they are either stupidly faithful, or astutely treacherous, and that when they are powerful they seek to avenge upon men the wrong that has been done to them. But however debased they may be, the need of woman's companionship is still powerful with them, and since they may not have a wife, they seek her as a friend; they marry; choosing a woman with child, like Sunbullu, the chief eunuch of Ibrahim First, in order to have a child to love; they have a harem of virgins, like the chief eunuch of Ahmed Second, in order to have beauty and grace about them, a semblance of affection, an illusion of love; they adopt a daughter, to have one woman's breast on which to rest their head when old, so as not to die without one caress, and to hear in their last years a kind and loving voice, after having heard throughout their lives nothing but the ironical laugh of

contempt; and there are those among them, who having become rich at the court and in the great houses, purchase when they are old, a pretty villa on the Bosphorus, and there try to forget, to deaden the remembrance of their own wretchedness in the gayety of feasts and guests. Among the many things that were told me of these unhappy beings, one has remained vivid in my memory; and it was a young physician of Pera who related it to me. Confuting the arguments of those who insist that eunuchs do not suffer:—"One evening," he said, "I was coming out of a rich Mussulman's house, where I had gone for the third time to visit one of his wives, who had disease of the heart. At my departure, as at my arrival, I was accompanied by a eunuch, calling out in the customary way: 'Women, withdraw,' in order to warn ladies and slaves that a stranger is in the harem, and that they must not be seen. In the court-yard the eunuch left me, to find my own way to the gate. Just as I was about to open it, I felt a touch upon my arm, and turning, saw before me in the twilight another eunuch, a young man of eighteen or twenty years of age, who looked fixedly at me, with eyes swimming in tears. I asked him what he wished. He hesitated a moment to reply, and then seizing my hand in both of his, and pressing it convulsively, he said in a trembling voice, full of despairing grief: 'Doctor! you who know the remedy for every ill, do you know of none for mine?' I cannot tell you how those simple words affected me; I tried to answer, but my voice failed me, and hastily opening the door, I took to flight. But all that evening, and for many days after, the figure of the youth stood before me and I heard his words, and my eyes moistened with compassion." O, philan-

thropists, public men, ministers, ambassadors, and you, deputies to the Parliament of Stamboul, and senators of the Crescent, raise your voices in the name of God against this bloody infamy, this horrid blot upon the honor of humanity, that in the twentieth century it may have become, like the slaughter in Bulgaria, only a painful recollection.

THE ARMY.

ALTHOUGH I knew before reaching Constantinople, that I should find there no trace of the splendid army of ancient times, yet I had no sooner arrived, than my most eager curiosity was to see the soldiers, with whom I am always in sympathy. But I found the reality much worse than I had imagined it. In place of the ample, picturesque, and warlike costume of the old time, I found the black ungraceful uniform, the red trousers, the scanty jackets, the stripes of an usher, the sashes of schoolboys, and on every head, from the Sultan to the drummer boy, that deplorable fez, that besides being mean and puerile, especially upon the bare skull of a corpulent Mussulman, is the cause of infinite ophthalmia and hemicrania. The Turkish army has lost the beauty of its ancient time, and has not yet acquired that of an European army; the soldiers looked sad, careless and dirty; they may be brave, but they are not attractive. As for their education, this is enough for me; that I have seen both officers and soldiers in the street using their fingers for a pocket handkerchief; that a soldier on guard on the bridge, where smoking is prohibited, tore the cigar out of a gentleman's mouth, the gentleman being a Vice-consul; and that in the mosque of the dervishes of Pera, another soldier, in my presence, wishing to make three Europeans understand that they were to take off their hats, struck them all three from their heads with one

blow. And I learned, that to raise the voice in deprecation of such treatment, was only to bring about your being seized like a bag of rags and carried off bodily to the guard-house. For which reason, while I was in Constantinople I always behaved to the soldiers with profound respect. I ceased also to wonder at their ways, when I had seen what manner of men they were before putting on the uniform. I saw one day, about a hundred recruits, probably from the interior of Asia Minor, passing through the streets of Stamboul, and was filled with pity and disgust. I seemed to be looking at the frightful banditti of Hassan the Mad, that passed through Constantinople in the sixteenth century, on their way to die underAustrian grape-shot in the plain of Pesth. I can still see those sinister faces, those long tresses of tangled hair, those half naked, tattooed bodies, those savage ornaments, and can smell the odor as of a menagerie of wild beasts that they left behind them. When the first news of the massacres in Bulgaria arrived, I thought of them at once. It must have been done by my friends of Scutari, said I in my heart. They, however, are the sole picturesque image that remains to me of Mussulman soldiers. Splendid armies of Bajazet, of Soliman, and of Mahomet, that I might see you once, for one instant, ranked upon the plain of Daoud Pashà! Every time that I passed in front of the triumphal gate of Adrianople, those armies were before my mind like a luminous vision, and I stopped to look at the gate, as if at any moment the Pashà quarter-master, herald of the Imperial staff, might appear.

The Pashà quarter-master marched, in fact, at the head of the army, with two horse-tails, insignia of his dignity. Behind

him came a great glitter and shine, produced by eight thousand copper spoons, stuck in the turbans of as many janissaries, in the midst of whom the waving heron plumes and glittering armor of the colonels were seen, followed by a crowd of servants loaded with arms and provisions. Behind the janissaries came a small army of volunteers and pages, in silken vests, with iron chain armor, and gleaming helmets, accompanied by a band of music; after these, the cannoneers, with cannon attached each to each by iron chains, then another small army of agas, pages, chamberlains, and feudatories, mounted upon mailed and plumed steeds. And this was merely the vanguard. Above the serried ranks floated standards of every color, horse-tails waved, lances, bows and other arms glittered, amid which could scarcely be distinguished the faces of warriors bronzed by the sun of Candia and of Persia; and the discordant sounds of drums, flutes, trumpets and timbrels, the voices of the singers who accompanied the janissaries, the clash of armor, the jingling of chains, the shouts of Allàh! were all confounded in one terrible and warlike noise that resounded from the camp of Daoud Pashà to the opposite shore of the Golden Horn.

Oh! painters and poets who have lovingly studied that splendid Oriental life, now forever vanished, help me to bring out from the walls of Stamboul the fabulous army of Mahomet Third.

The vanguard has gone by; another dazzling throng advances. Is it the Sultan? No, the deity has not yet perhaps issued from the temple. It is the cortége of the favorite vizier. There are forty agas dressed in sables, upon forty horses caparisoned in velvet and with silver reins, behind which comes

a crowd of pages and magnificent grooms leading other forty horses covered with gold, and loaded with shields, maces, and scimetars. Another cortége advances. It is not yet the Sultan. It is that of the members of the Council of State, the high dignitaries of the Seraglio, and the Grand Treasurer, accompanied by a band of music and a swarm of volunteers in crimson caps ornamented with birds' wings, and dressed in furs, rose-colored silk, leopard-skins, and Hungarian kolpacks, and armed with long lances bound round with silk, and garlanded with flowers.

Another flood of horsemen sweeps through the gate of Adrianople. It is not yet the Sultan. It is the cortége of the Grand Vizier. First come a crowd of arquebusiers on horseback, with many distinguished agas worthy in the sight of the Grand Signor, and then come forty agas of the Grand Vizier in the midst of a forest of twelve hundred lances borne by as many pages, and other forty pages dressed in orange color and armed with bows and quivers embroidered with gold, and two hundred young boys divided into six bands of six different colors, among which rode relations of the prime minister, followed by a throng of grooms, armorers, servants, pages, agas in golden vests, and banner-bearers; and last of all comes the Kiaya, or minister of the interior, surrounded by twelve *sciau*, or executioners of justice, and followed by the band of the Grand Vizier.

Another throng issues from the gate. It is not yet the Sultan. It is a crowd of *sciau*, and holders of various offices, splendidly dressed and escorting the jurisconsults, mollahs, and others, behind whom comes the grand Huntsman, or grand Falconer, with a train of horsemen carrying before them on their saddles, leopards tamed for the chase, and a procession of falconers,

esquires, guardians of the ferrets, trumpeters, and packs of caparisoned and bejewelled dogs.

Another company appears. The spectators prostrate themselves; it is the Sultan! no—not yet; it is not the head, but the heart of the army; the sacred ark, the fire of courage and pious rage, the Mussulman *carroccio*, around which shall rise heaps of corpses and stream torrents of blood, the green standard of the Prophet, the ensign of ensigns, taken from the mosque of Sultan Ahmed, and floating over a ferocious crowd of dervishes, covered with lion and bear skins, encircled by a band of preachers of inspired aspect, wrapped in mantles of camels' hair, between two ranks of emirs, descendants of the Prophet, wearing green turbans; and all together they raise a threatening and sinister clamor of shouts and prayers and sacred songs.

Yet another wave of men and horses. It is not yet the Sultan. It is a troop of *sciau*, brandishing their silver wands to make way for the Judge of Constantinople, and the Grand Judge of Europe and Asia, whose enormous turbans tower above the crowd; it is the favorite vizier, and the vizier *camaican*, in turbans starred and striped with silver and gold; it is all the viziers of the divan before whom wave horse tails dyed in henna, and borne on lances painted red and blue; and finally it is the army Judge followed by an interminable tail of servants in leopard-skins and armed with poles, pages, armorers and vivandiers.

Now comes the Grand Vizier himself, dressed in a purple caftan lined with sables, mounted upon a horse covered with steel and gold, followed by a swarm of servants in red velvet,

and surrounded by a throng of high dignitaries and lieutenant generals of janissaries, among whom the muftis show white like swans, amid a company of peacocks; and behind these, between two files of lancers in gilded vests, and a double rank of archers with crescent crests, the gaudy grooms of the Seraglio, leading a troop of Arab, Turkoman, Persian, and Caramanian horses, caparisoned in velvet and gold, and bearing bucklers and arms sparkling with precious stones; last of all, two sacred camels, one of which carries the Koran and the other a fragment of the Kaaba.

The cortège of the Grand Vizier passed, there is a burst of noisy music from drums and trumpets, the spectators fly, cannon thunder, a troop of running footmen rush through the gate whirling their scimetars round their heads, and behold, in the midst of a clump of lances, a throng of plumes and swords, surrounded by a dazzling glitter of gold and silver helmets, behold the Sultan of Sultans, the king of kings, the distributor of crowns to the princes of the world, the shadow of God upon earth, the emperor and sovereign lord of the White Sea and the Black Sea, of Rumelia and Anatolia, of the province of Sulkadr, of Diarbekir, of Kurdistan, Aderbigian, Agiem, Sciam, Haleb, Egypt, Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem, and all the confines of Arabia and of Yemen, together with all the other provinces conquered by his glorious predecessors and august ancestors, or subjected by his glorious majesty and his own flaming and triumphant sword. The solemn and splendid cortége passes slowly by, and now and then a glimpse may be caught of the three jewelled feathers of the turban of the deity, with grave and pallid visage, and breast flaming with diamonds;

then the circle closes in, the cavalcade passes on, the menacing scimetars are lowered, the spectators lift their foreheads from the ground, the vision has disappeared.

To the imperial cortége succeeds a throng of officials, of whom one carries on his head the Sultan's stool—(*sgabello*), another his sabre, another his turban, another his mantle, a fifth the silver coffee pot, and a sixth the gold coffee pot; other groups of pages pass; a troop of white eunuchs, three hundred chamberlains on horseback, dressed in white caftans; then come the hundred carriages of the harem with silvered wheels, drawn by oxen garlanded with flowers, or by horses with trappings of velvet, and flanked by a legion of black eunuchs; pass three hundred mules laden with the baggage and treasure of the court, pass a thousand camels carrying water, pass a thousand dromedaries carrying provisions; passes an army of armorers, miners and workmen, accompanied by a band of buffoons and jesters, and finally passes the bulk of the fighting army: the janissaries, yellow *silidars*, purple *azabs*, *spahis* with red ensigns, foreign horsemen with white standards, cannons that vomit blocks of marble and lead, feudatories from three continents, savage volunteers from the more distant provinces; clouds of banners, forests of plumes, torrents of turbans, iron phalanxes, that go to overrun Europe like a malediction from God, leaving behind them a desert strewn with smoking ruins and heaps of human bones.

IDLENESS.

ALTHOUGH at some hours of the day Constantinople has an appearance of industry, in reality it is perhaps the laziest city in Europe. Turks and Franks are all alike in this. Everybody gets up as late as possible. Even in summer, at an hour when all our cities are awake, Constantinople is still sleeping. The sun is high before it is possible to find a shop open or to get a cup of coffee. Hotels, offices, bazaars and banks are all snoring merrily together, and even a cannon would not startle them. Then there are the holidays: the Turkish Friday, the Jewish Sabbath, the Christian Sunday, the innumerable Saints' days of the Greek and Armenian calendar, all scrupulously observed; and all, although they may be partial, constraining to idleness even that part of the population that is foreign to them; all this may give an idea of how much work is done in Constantinople in the seven days of the week. There are offices that are open only twenty-four hours in eight days. Every day one or the other of the five peoples of the great city goes lounging about the streets, in holiday dress, with no other thought than to kill time. The Turks are masters of this art. They are capable of making a two-penny cup of coffee last for half a day, and of stopping five hours motionless under a cypress tree in a cemetery. Their idleness is the real thing, brother to death, like sleep, a profound repose of all the faculties, a sus-

pension of all cares, a mode of existence quite unknown to Europeans. They do not wish to have even a suggestion of walking. At Stamboul there are no public promenades, and if there were, Turks would not frequent them, because going to a particular place to move about in it, would seem too much like work. The Turk enters the first cemetery, or the first street that presents itself, and goes wherever his legs carry him, wherever the windings of the way, or the movement of the crowd may take him. Rarely does he go to any place merely to see that place. There are Turks in Stamboul who have never been beyond Kassim-Pasha, and Turkish nobles who have never penetrated beyond the islands of the Princes, where they have friends, or beyond their villa on the Bosphorus. For them the height of beatitude consists in total inertia of mind and body. Therefore they leave to the restless Christians all the great industries that demand care, many steps, and journeys; and restrict themselves to small affairs, which may be transacted seated, and rather more with the eyes than with the mind. Work, which with us dominates and regulates all the other occupations of life, is their subordinate to pleasure and convenience. With us, rest is an interruption of labor; with them, labor is only an interruption of repose. First of all and at any cost, one must sleep, dream, smoke, so many hours; and in the time that is left, do something or other to get one's living. Time, among the Turks, signifies quite another thing from that which it signifies for us. Day, month, and year, have for them only the hundredth part of the value that they have in Europe. The very shortest time that an official of the Turkish ministry requires to give a response to the simplest demand is

two weeks. Diligence in finishing business merely for the pleasure of seeing it finished is unknown to them. Even among the porters outside, not one Turk of them is ever seen in the streets of Stamboul hastening his steps. They all walk in the same measure, as if all took their time from the beat of one drum. For us, life is a rapid torrent, for them it is stagnant water.

NIGHT.

CONSTANTINOPLE is by day the most splendid, and by night the darkest city in Europe. A few lamps at a great distance from each other, scarcely break the obscurity of the principal streets; the others are as dark as caverns, and no one risks themselves in them without a lantern in his hand. At night-fall, however, the city becomes a desert; a few guards here and there, troops of dogs, some furtive women, some companies of young men bursting noisily out of the subterranean beer shops, and mysterious lanterns, that appear and disappear like *ignes-fatui* here and there in the cemeteries and alleys, are all that are to be seen. Then it is good to see Stamboul from the heights of Pera and Galata. The innumerable lighted windows, the lights of the ships, their reflections in the water, and the stars form an immense extent of fiery points in which the port, the city and the sky are all confounded in one great firmament. And when the heavens are clouded and the moon shines in one small clear space, above the darkness of Stamboul, above the black masses of groves and gardens, the Imperial mosques shine white, like enormous marble tombs, and the city resembles a metropolis of giants. But it is even more beautiful and solemn in the starless and moonless nights at the hour when all lights are extinguished. Then there is one vast black mass from Seraglio Point to Eyub, a measureless outline in which the hills

seem mountains, and the infinitude of points that crown them take the appearance of fantastic forests, or of armies, ruins, castles, and rocks, that carry the mind into the region of dreams. On such dark nights it is pleasant to contemplate Stamboul from some high terrace and give oneself up to fancy; to penetrate in thought into the great dark city, to uncover the myriads of harems lighted by faint lamps, to see the beauties that triumph, and those that weep neglected, and the trembling eunuchs listening at doors; to follow nocturnal lovers through the labyrinths of alleys; to wander in the silent galleries of the Grand Bazaar, and in the vast deserted cemeteries; to lose oneself in the midst of the innumerable columns of the great underground cisterns; to imagine oneself shut up alone in the gigantic mosque of Soliman, and making the dark nave resound with cries of fear and horror, tearing your hair and invoking the mercy of God; and then all at once to exclaim:—What a joke! I am on my friend Santoro's terrace, and in the room below awaits me a supper of sybarites, composed of all the most agreeable people in Pera.

LIFE AT CONSTANTINOPLE.

In the house of my good friend Santoro, there assembled every evening a number of Italians; lawyers, artists, doctors, merchants, with whom the time passed delightfully. Those were indeed, *conversazione!* If they could have been stenographed, a charming book might have been produced from them! The physician who had visited a harem, the artist who had been on the Bosphorus to paint a pasha's portrait, the lawyer who had been defending a cause before a tribunal, each told his story, and every one was a sketch of Oriental manners. There was a new one every minute. "Do you know what happened this morning? The Sultan threw an inkstand at the head of the minister of finance." "Have you heard the news? The government, after three months delay, has finally paid the salaries of its employees, and all Galata is inundated with copper money." Another tells how a Turkish president of a tribunal, irritated by the weak reasoning of a bad French lawyer in his defence of a bad cause, paid him this pretty compliment in the presence of the audience—"My dear advocate, it is useless your losing your breath in this way, in striving to make your cause a good one; ——" and here he pronounced Cambronne's word with all its letters, "however you may turn it back and forth is always ——" and he pronounced the word a second time.*

* The translator follows the author, who leaves Cambronne's word in blank as above.

The conversation, naturally, spread over fields quite unknown to me. With the same frequency with which occur among us the names of Paris, Vienna, or Genoa, came in the names of persons and things in Tiflis, Trebizond, Teheran, and Damascus, and one had a friend there, and another had been there, and a third was going there ; I felt myself in another world, and new horizons opened all around me, and sometimes I thought regretfully of the day in which I must go back into the narrow circle of my ordinary life. How can I, I said to myself, ever adapt myself again to the usual talk on the usual subjects? All Europeans in Constantinople must feel this ; for to those who have seen this life, every other appears uniform and colorless. It is a lighter, easier, younger life than that of any city in Europe. Living as though encamped in a strange land, in the midst of a constant succession of strange and unforeseen events, one acquires a certain sentiment of the futility and instability of all things, which resembles very much the fatalistic faith of the Mussulmans, and a kind of serenity of mind without reflection is the result. The nature of that people that lives, as the poet says, in a kind of familiar intimacy with death, considering life as merely a pilgrimage, so short as to leave no time nor need for laying plans of labor and fatigue, enters little by little into the European, and he also begins to live from day to day, without descending too much into himself, and filling, in the world, as far as it is possible for him to do so, the simple and easy part of spectator. To have to do with a people so different, and to think and talk as they do, gives a kind of lightness to the spirit, that makes it soar above many sentiments and ideas which, among us in our own country, are so many neces-

sities in our conformity with the world about us, and which we strive anxiously and eagerly to obtain. Besides, the presence of the Mussulman population is a constant source of curiosity and observation, and a daily spectacle which diverts the mind from many thoughts and cares. The form of the city also is more pleasing than that of our cities can be, in which the eye and thought are imprisoned in a narrow circle of streets and houses; while there, at every step, eye and mind dart into the immense and smiling distance. And finally, there is an illimitable liberty of life, the result of the great variety of customs and manners; there everything can be done, and no one is astonished; the echoes of the strangest events die as they are born in that immensity of moral anarchy; Europeans live there as if in a republican confederation; they enjoy the same freedom that they might enjoy in their own cities at the moment of some great political convulsion; it is like an interminable masked ball or a perpetual carnival. For this, even more than for its beauty, Constantinople is a city that can not be inhabited for any length of time, without leaving in the mind a remembrance that turns to something very like home-sickness; and consequently Europeans love it ardently, and take root in it; and it is in this sense that the Turks call it, "The enchantress of many lovers," or say in their proverb, that he who has drunk the waters of Top-hané, is in love for life—there is no remedy.

ITALIANS.

THE Italian colony is one of the most numerous in Constantinople; but not one of the most prosperous. There are many rich men, but also many very poor ones, especially workmen from Southern Italy who cannot find work; and it is also the worst represented of any of the colonies in point of newspapers, because they are only born to die. When I was there, they were expecting the appearance of the *Levantino;* and a specimen number had been put forth which announced the academic titles and the special merits of the editor: seventy-seven in all, without counting modesty as one. Taking a walk on a Sunday morning in the street of Pera, one can see all the Italian families going to mass, and hear all the dialects of Italy spoken. Sometimes I was pleased, but not always. Sometimes I felt compassion for so many of my fellow-citizens expatriated, many of whom had no doubt been blown there by who knows what strange or stormy wind of circumstance; I was pained at the sight of those old people who would never see Italy again; those children, for whom its name could only produce a confused and fleeting image of a dear and distant country; those young girls, many of whom would marry men of another nationality, and found families where nothing of Italian would remain but the name and the memory of the mother. I saw beautiful Genoese women who might have come that moment

from the gardens of Acquasola, pretty Neapolitan faces, saucy little heads, that seemed as familiar to me as if I had met them a hundred times under the porticoes of the Po, or in the gallery Victor Emmanuel at Milan. I should have liked to tie them all together, two and two, with knots of rose-colored ribbon, and send them off to Italy in a ship sailing fifteen knots an hour. As a curiosity I should have liked also to carry back to Italy a specimen of the Italian language as I heard it spoken at Pera, by the Italians of the colony, more especially the third and fourth generation. A *della-Cruscan* academician hearing them would have taken to his bed with a tertian ague. The tongue that might be made by mixing together the dialect of a Piedmontese porter, a Lombard fruit-seller, and a Romagnol carter would, I think, be less horrible than that which is spoken on the shores of the Golden Horn. It is an already bastard Italian mingled with four or five other tongues bastardized also. And the most curious thing about it is that in the midst of the infinite barbarisms, there shines out now and then some chosen word or cultivated phrase, records of the anthology with which many of our worthy compatriots seek to keep their mouths in the habit of the "*Celestial Tuscan speech.*" But compared to others these may pretend, as Cesari said, to the fame of good speakers. There are some who can scarcely make themselves understood. One day I was accompanied somewhere by a lad of sixteen or seventeen, the son of an Italian, born at Pera. On the way I tried to converse, but he seemed not to wish to talk. He answered in a low voice, with short words, holding down his head, and blushing.

"What is the matter?" said I.

"I speak so badly!" he replied, sighing. In fact he did speak the oddest Italian, full of deformed and incomprehensible words, resembling the so-called *lingua-franca*, which, according to some French joker, consists of a certain number of words and phrases in Italian, Spanish, French, and Greek, that tumble out rapidly one after the other until one at length appears that may be understood by the person listening. It is not necessary, however, to resort to this at Pera, where almost everybody, Turks included, understands a little Italian. The language most commonly used for writing, however, is the French. Italian literature there is none. I remember only having one day discovered at the bottom of a commercial newspaper in a café at Galata, written partly in Italian and partly in French, eight melancholic little verses, which treated of zephyrs, stars, and sighs. Oh, poor poet! I seemed to see him buried under a pile of merchandise, and exhaling in those verses his last breath.

THEATRES.

At Constantinople, any one who has a strong stomach may pass the evening at the theatre, and may have his choice among a crowd of small theatres of every sort, many of which have gardens and beer-shops attached to them, and in some may be found the Italian comedy, and a crew of Italian actors who leave much to be desired. The Turks, however, frequent in preference the places in which certain French actresses, painted, half naked, and all brazen, sing their double-meaning songs with the accompaniment of an execrable orchestra. One of these theatres was the Alhambra, in the principal street of Pera; a long hall, always full, and red with fezes from the stage to the door. What these songs were, and with what unimaginable gestures, those intrepid ladies made their meaning clear to the delighted Turks, no words can convey. Only those who have been at the *Capellanes* theatre in Madrid, can say that they have seen or heard anything like it. At all the most impudent gestures, or highly spiced jokes, the big Turks, seated in long rows, burst into loud roars of laughter; and the habitual mask of dignity falling from their faces, the depths of their real nature and the secrets of their grossly sensual lives become visible.

And yet there is nothing that the Turk hides so carefully as the sensuality of his nature and his life. In the streets, he is

rarely accompanied by a woman; rarely looks at one; still more rarely speaks to one; he takes it as an offence if any one asks after the health of his wife; to judge only by appearances, they seem the most austere and chastest people in the world. But that same Turk who blushes to his ears when asked about his wife, will send his children, boys and girls, to witness the filthy obscenities of Carageus, corrupting their imaginations before their senses are awakened; and he himself will often forget the delights of his harem in such pleasures as Bajazet the Fiery, and Mahomet the Reformer set the example of, and others, no doubt, since their time. And if there were no other, Caragheus alone is enough to give an idea and a proof of the profound corruption hidden under the veil of Mussulman austerity. He is a grotesque figure representing a caricature of the middle class Turk, a species of *ombre-chinoise*, that moves his head and limbs behind a transparent veil, and is always the principal personage in certain outrageously farcical comedies, of which the subject is most generally an amorous intrigue. He is a sort of ultra-Pulcinella, very much depraved; foolish, false, and cynical, foul-mouthed as a fish-wife and wanton as a satyr, and he excites yells of laughter and shouts of enthusiasm in his audience, with every sort of extravagance of word or gesture, that are obscene or that conceal obscenity.

COOKERY.

WISHING to make a study of the Turkish kitchen, I caused my good friends of Pera to conduct me to an eating-house *ad hoc*, where we should find Oriental dishes, from the most exquisite tit-bit of the Seraglio, down to camels' flesh dressed in Arab fashion, and horse-flesh *a la* Turkoman. My friend Santoro ordered a rigorously Turkish repast, from soup to fruit, and I, encouraging myself with the recollection of all the renowned men who have died for science, swallowed a little bit of everything, without uttering a complaint. About twenty dishes were served. The Turks, like most Eastern people, are something like children, who prefer rather to taste many things than to satisfy themselves on few; a pastoral people but yesterday, they have become citizens, and disdain simplicity in eating, as something that savors of a base condition. I cannot give an exact account of all the dishes, because, of some I only retained a vague and sinister remembrance. I recollect the *Rebad* which is composed of tiny bits of mutton roasted before a very hot fire, seasoned with pepper and cloves, and sewed between two soft and greasy cakes; a dish good to give criminals of the lighter order. I can recall also the flavor of the *pilau*, composed of rice and mutton, which last is the *sine qua non* of all meals, and may be called the sacramental dish of the Turks, as is maccaroni to the Neapolitans, *cassusu* to the Arabs, and *puchero* to the

Spaniards. I remember, and it is the only thing that I should care to taste again, the *Rosb'ab* which is sipped with a spoon at the end of dinner ; made of raisins, apples, plums, cherries and other fruits, cooked with a great deal of sugar, and flavored with musk, rose water, and limes. There were besides numerous plates of lamb and mutton, cut into small dice and broiled until they had no taste left; fish swimming in oil ; balls of rice rolled in vine leaves, squash reduced to a syrup, salads in paste, preserves of various kinds, *ragouts* seasoned with every sort of aromatic herb, of which one might have been added to every article in the penal code for the benefit of delinquents. Finally, a great dish of pastry, crowning work of some Arab pastry-cook, in which there was a small steamer, a chimerical lion, and a sugar-house with grated windows.

Altogether it seemed to me that I had swallowed the contents of a portable pharmacy, or had eaten one of those repasts that are prepared by children in their play, when the dishes are chiefly composed of powdered brick, pounded grass, and mashed fruit, which make a fine show at a distance. The dishes at a Turkish dinner are served rapidly, three or four at a time, and the Turks help themselves with their fingers, there being no forks in use, only spoons and knives; and there is but one drinking cup for all the company, which a servant keeps constantly filled with filtered water. Such, however, were not the ways of the Turks who dined near us at our eating-house. They were Turks who loved their ease, for they kept their feet upon the table; each one had his plate, and bravely used a fork; and they also drank strong drink in the face and beard of Mahomet. I observed that they did not kiss their bread as

good Mussulmans should, before beginning to eat, and that they cast many covetous glances at our bottles, although according to mufti law, it is a mortal sin to fix the eyes upon a bottle of wine. However, this "father of abominations," one drop of which is enough to cause to fall upon a Mussulman head, "the anathema of all the angels of heaven and earth," is every day gaining converts among the Turks, and it is perhaps only some remaining respect for opinion that prevents them from rendering public homage to it; and for my own part, I believe, that if some day a thick darkness should descend over Constantinople, and after an hour, the sun should suddenly shine out, fifty thousand Turks would be found with the bottle at their lips. In this as in many other offences of the Osmanli, the great stone of scandal had been the Sultans; and it is curious that it has been precisely the dynasty reigning over a people for whom it is a sin against God to drink wine, that has given to history the largest number of drunkards: so sweet is forbidden fruit even to the lips of the shadow of God upon earth. It was, they say, Bajazet First who began the series of imperial sots, and as in original sin, the woman here also was the first sinner: it was the wife of this same Bajazet, daughter of a king of Servia, who offered to her husband the first glass of Tokay. Then the second Bajazet got tipsy on Cypress and Schiraz wine. Then Soliman First, who burned in the port of Constantinople all the vessels loaded with wine, and poured melted lead down the throats of drinkers, died drunk, by the arrow of one of his archers. Then came Selim First, surnamed *Messth*, or the drunkard, who had orgies of three days in duration, and publicly touched glasses with men of the law, and

men of the church. In vain Mahomet Third thundered against the "abomination of the demon;" in vain Ahmed First destroyed all the taverns, and all the wine-presses in Stamboul; in vain Murad Fourth went about the city accompanied by an executioner, and promptly sheared off the heads of those found drunk. He himself, the ferocious hypocrite, staggered about the halls of the Seraglio like a tipsy plebeian; and after him, the bottle, the small, black, festive spirits, broke into the Seraglio, hid itself in the shops, peeped from under the soldier's bed, or poked its silvered or purple head from the cushions and divans of the harem, violated the precincts of the mosques, and spouted its sacrilegious foam upon the yellow pages of the Koran itself.

MAHOMET.

APROPOS of religion, I could not get this question out of my head, as I walked about Constantinople: if the voice of the muezzin were not heard, how would a Christian know that this people's religion was not the same as his own? The Byzantine architecture of the mosques makes them appear like Christian churches; there is no exterior sign of the rites of Islamism; Turkish soldiers escort the viaticum through the streets; an ignorant Christian might live a year at Constantinople without being aware that Mahomet reigns over the greater part of the population, instead of Christ. And this thought always brings me to the very small substantial differences, the blade of grass, as the Abyssinian Christians said to the first followers of Mahomet, that divides the two religions; and to the little cause by which it came about that Arabia was converted to Islamism, instead of to Christianity, or, if not Christianity, to a religion so closely resembling it, that cities being confounded with it, or remaining itself alone, it would have changed the fate of the whole Oriental world. And that little cause was the voluptuous nature of a handsome Arab boy, tall and fair, with black eyes, a deep voice, and an ardent soul, who, not having the power to conquer his own senses, instead of cutting down to the root the predominating vice of his people, contented himself with pruning it; instead of proclaiming conjugal unity as he

proclaimed the unity of God, only enclosed in a narrower circle, and consecrated by religion, the dissoluteness and egotism of men. Certainly he would have had to vanquish a very strong resistance; but it does not seem improbable that he could have done so, since, in order to found the worship of one God among an idolatrous people, he destroyed a monstrous edifice of tradition, superstition, privileges and interests of every kind, which had grown and interlaced for centuries, and caused to be accepted among the dogmas of his religion for which millions of believers would now lay down their lives, a paradise, the first announcement of which provoked a storm of indignation and scorn among the people. But the handsome Arab boy made a compact with his senses, and half the world changed its face, for polygamy was in reality the capital vice of his legislation, and the first cause of the decadence of all the peoples that embraced his faith. Without this degradation of one sex in favor of the other, without the sanction of this monstrous injustice, which disturbs the whole order of human duties, corrupting the rich, oppressing the poor, fomenting sloth and effeminacy, enervating the family, generating confusion in the rights of birth of the reigning dynasty, and opposing itself as an insuperable barrier to the union of the Mussulman populations with those of another faith in the Orient; if, to return to the first argument, the handsome Arab boy had had the misfortune to be born a little less robust, or the courage to live a chaste life, who knows! perhaps there would be now a regulated and civilized East, and universal civilization would be one century further in advance.

RAMAZAN.

FINDING myself at Constantinople in the month of Ramazan, which is the ninth month of the Turkish year, in which falls the Mussulman season of Lent, I witnessed every evening a comedy which is worth description. During the whole of Lent it is prohibited to the Turks to eat, drink, or smoke, from the rising of the sun to the setting. Almost all, consequently, spend the night in eating and drinking; but as long as the sun is above the horizon, almost all respect the religious precept, and no one dares to transgress it publicly. One morning my friend and I went to visit an acquaintance, one of the Sultan's aid-de-camps, an unprejudiced young officer, and we found him in a room on the ground floor of the imperial palace, with a cup of coffee in his hand. "What!" exclaimed Yank, "do you dare to take coffee after sunrise?" The officer shrugged his shoulders and replied that he laughed at Ramazan and fasting; but just at that moment a door opened suddenly, and he made so rapid a movement to hide his cup that he overturned it, and spilt it on his boot. It may be understood from this how rigorous is the abstinence imposed upon those who are all day long under the eyes of others; the boatmen, for instance. It is amusing to plant oneself upon the bridge of the Sultan Validé a few minutes before the sun goes down. About a thousand boatmen may be seen at this point, far and near, going and coming, or

sitting still. They have every one been fasting since dawn, are wild with hunger, and have their little supper ready in the caique, and their eyes continually move from the food to the sun, from the sun to the food, while there is a general agitation and restlessness among them, as in a menagerie when the animals are about to be fed. The disappearance of the sun is announced by a gun. Before that longed-for moment no one puts a crust of bread or a drop of water into his mouth. Sometimes, in a corner of the Golden Horn, we tried to bribe our boatmen to eat before the lawful moment, but they always answered; *Iok! Iok! Iok!* no! no! no! pointing to the sun with a timorous gesture. When the sun is half hidden, they begin to take the food in their hands; when there is nothing but a thin luminous arch, then those who are motionless, and those who are rowing, those who are crossing the Golden Horn and those who are skimming over the Bosphorus, those who are sailing in the Sea of Marmora, and those who are resting in the most solitary bays of the Asiatic shore, all with one accord turn towards the west and stand fixed, with their eyes on the sun, mouths open, bread in hand, and joy in the visage. When nothing is visible but one small fiery point, at last the fiery point vanishes, the cannon thunders, and in that very instant thirty-two thousand teeth bite off enormous morsels from a thousand pieces of bread; but what am I saying? A thousand! In every house, in every café, in every tavern the same thing is happening at the same moment; and for a few minutes the Turkish city is nothing but a monster with a hundred thousand mouths, that eats and drinks.

ANTIQUE CONSTANTINOPLE.

But what must this city have been in the times of Ottoman glory! I cannot get that thought out of my head. Then, over the Bosphorus, white with sails, there rose no black smoke to stain the azure of the sky and sea. In the port and harbor of the Sea of Marmora, among the old war-ships, with high sculptured poops, silver crescents, crimson standards, and golden lanterns, floated the shattered and blood-stained hulks of Genoese, Venetian, and Spanish galleys. There were no bridges over the Golden Horn: but from one shore to the other perpetually darted back and forth a myriad of splendid boats, amidst which shone the white lances of the Seraglio, with canopies of scarlet fringed with silver and gold, and rowed by boatmen in silken habits. Scutari was yet a village; from thence to Galata there were only a few scattered houses; no great palace yet reared its head upon the hill of Pera; the aspect of the city was not as grandiose as it is now, but it was more completely Oriental. The law which prescribed colors being still in force, the religion of their inhabitants could be known by the colors of the houses: Stamboul was all yellow and red, except the sacred and public edifices, which were as white as snow; the Armenian quarters were light grey, the Greek quarters dark grey, the Hebrew, purple. The passion for flowers was universal, as in Holland, and the gardens showed

great masses of hyacinths, tulips, and roses. The luxuriant vegetation of the hills not having been yet destroyed by suburbs, Constantinople appeared a city hidden in a forest. Within there were only narrow alleys, but they were pervaded by a crowd in the highest degree picturesque.

The enormous turban gave a colossal and magnificent aspect to the male population. All the women, except the mother of the Sultan, went completely veiled, leaving nothing but the eyes visible, forming an anonymous and enigmatic population apart, and giving a gentle air of mystery to the city. A severe law determining the dress of all ranks, offices, grades, ages, they could be distinguished by the form of the turban, or the color of the caftan, as if Constantinople had been one great court. The horse being still "man's only coach," the streets were filled with horsemen, and long files of camels and dromedaries belonging to the army, traversed the city in all directions and gave it the grand and barbarous aspect of an Asiatic metropolis. Gilded arabas drawn by oxen, crossed the green draped carriages of the *ulemas*, the red of the *Kadi-aschieri*, or the light teleka with satin curtains and panels ornamented with fantastic paintings. Slaves of all countries, from Poland to Ethiopia, hurried by, rattling the chains that had been riveted on the field of battle. Groups of soldiers clothed only in glorious rags filled the squares, and the courts of the mosques, showing their scars yet great from the battles of Vienna, Belgrade, Rodi, Damascus. Hundreds of story tellers, with loud voices and inspired gestures, recounted to delighted Mussulmans the glorious actions of the army that was fighting at three months march from Stamboul. Pashas, Beys, Aghas, Mussel-

ims, a crowd of dignitaries and great nobles, dressed with theatrical splendor, accompanied by a throng of servants, pushed through the press of people that gave way before them like ripe grain before the wind; ambassadors from European states passed by, coming to ask peace or conclude alliances; and caravans bringing gifts from African and Asiatic monarchs went in long procession. Throngs of insolent *seldars* and *spahis* rattled their sabres stained with the blood of twenty peoples, and the handsome Greek and Hungarian pages of the Seraglio, dressed like princes, walked haughtily among the obsequious multitude, who respected in them the unnatural caprices of their sovereign. Here and there before a day was seen a trophy of knotted staves: it was the sign of the Janissaries, who then filled the office of police in the interior of the city. Hebrews, bearing the bodies of executed criminals to the Bosphorus, were to be seen; and every morning in the Balik-bazaar, could be found a corpse stretched on the ground, with the severed head under the right arm, the sentence upon the breast, and a stone upon the sentence; in the streets, the bodies of nobles hung from the first hook or beam that the hurried executioner had found; in the night the terrified passenger came upon some poor wretch thrown into the street from some torture chamber, where his hands and feet had been cut off; and under the noon-day sun, merchants detected in fraud were nailed by one ear to the doors of their shops. There was as yet no law which restricted the liberty of sepulture, and graves were dug and the dead were buried at any hour of the day, in the gardens, in the alleys, in the squares, before the doors of houses. In the courts could be heard the shrieks of

lambs and sheep offered in holocaust to Allah upon a birth or a circumcision. From time to time a troop of eunuchs galloped by, shouting and threatening, and the streets became deserted, doors and windows closed, the whole quarter as if it were dead; for then passed by the train of glittering carriages containing the beauties of the Sultan's harem, filling the air with their laughter and perfumes. Sometimes a personage of the court, making his way through the crowded street, would turn suddenly pale at the sight of six mean looking men entering a shop: those six men were the Sultan, with four officials and an executioner, going from shop to shop to verify weights and measures. In all Constantinople's enormous body there boiled a plethoric and feverish life. The treasure overflowed with jewels, the arsenals with arms, the barracks with soldiers, the caravanserais with travellers; the slave markets swarmed with beauties, dealers, and great lords; learned men thronged the places where the archives of the mosque were kept; long-winded viziers prepared for future generations the interminable annals of the Empire; poets, pensioners of the Seraglio, sang at the baths the imperial wars and loves; armies of Bulgarian and Armenian laborers toiled to build mosques with blocks of granite from Egypt or marble from Paros, while by sea were arriving columns from the temples of the Archipelago, and by land the spoils of the churches of Pesth and Ofen; in the port they made ready the fleet of three hundred sails that was to carry dismay to the shores of the Mediterranean; between Stamboul and Adrianople spread cavalcades of seven thousand falconers, and seven thousand huntsmen, and in the intervals of military revolts, foreign wars, conflagrations that destroyed

twenty thousand houses in one night, they celebrated feasts of thirty days duration before the plenipotentiaries of all the states of Africa, Europe and Asia. Then Mussulman enthusiasm became wild, and turned to madness. In the presence of the Sultan and his court, in the midst of those immeasurable palms, filled with birds, fruits, and looking-glasses, to give passage to which whole houses and walls were thrown dowr, among trains of lions and sirens in sugar, carried by horses caparisoned in silver damask; among mountains of royal presents gathered from all parts of the Empire and from all the courts in the world, alternated the mock battles of the Janissaries, the furious dances of the dervishes, the sanguinary murders of Christian prisoners, and the popular feasts of ten thousand dishes of *Cascassà;* elephants and giraffes danced in the hippodrome; bears and foxes rushed through the crowd with rockets tied to their tails; to allegorical pantomimes succeeded lascivious dances, grotesque maskings, fantastic processions, races, symbolical cars, games, and comedies; as the sun went down the festival degenerated more and more into a mad tumult, and five hundred mosques sparkling with lights formed over the city an immense aureole of fire that announced to the shepherds in the mountains of Asia, and the sailors of the Propontis, the orgies of the new Babylon. Such was Stamboul, the formidable, voluptuous, and unbridled; beside which the city of to-day is nothing but an old queen sick of hypochondria.

THE ARMENIANS.

OCCUPIED as I was in general with the Turks, I had not the time, as may be supposed, to study much the three nations, Armenian, Greek and Hebrew, that form the rest of the population; a study, for the rest, requiring much time and attention, since, though each of these peoples has preserved more or less its own characteristics, the exterior life of all the three has become overlaid with a Mussulman color, which is now being merged in its turn into a tint of European civilization; and consequently they all three present that difficulty of observation that might be found in a shifting and dissolving view.

The Armenians in especial, "Christians in faith and spirit, and Asiatic Mussulmans in birth and blood," are not only difficult to study closely, but also difficult to distinguish at sight from the Turks, because those among them who have not yet adopted European costume, still wear the Turkish dress with very slight modifications; and the antique felt cap that with certain special colors used to mark the race, is now scarcely ever seen. Nor do they differ much in feature from the Turks. In general they are tall of stature, robust, corpulent, light complexioned, grave and dignified in walk and manner, and showing in their faces the two qualities proper to their nature; an open, quick, industrious, and pertinacious spirit, by which they are wonderfully well adapted to commerce, and that placidity, which

some call pliant servility, with which they succeed in insinuating themselves everywhere, from Hungary to China, and in rendering themselves acceptable, particularly to the Turk, whose good will they have conquered as docile subjects and obsequious friends. They have neither within nor without any trace of warlike or heroic qualities. Such, perhaps, they were not formerly in the Asiatic region from which they came and their brethren who remain there are said to be quite different; but the transplanted ones are truly a quiet and prudent people, modest in their lives, having no ambition beyond their traffic, and more sincerely religious, it is said, than any other people in Constantinople. The Turks call them *the camels of the empire*, and the Franks say that every Armenian is born a calculator; these two sayings are in great part justified by the facts, for thanks to their physical strength, and their quick and acute intelligence, they not only furnish Constantinople with a large number of architects, engineers, physicians, and ingenious and patient artificers of many kinds, but they form also the larger part of the porters and bankers; porters that carry marvellous weights, and bankers that amass fabulous treasures. At first sight, however, no one would notice that there was an Armenian people at Constantinople, so completely has the plant adapted itself to the strange soil. The women themselves, because of whom the Armenian houses are closed against the stranger as closely as those of the Mussulmans, dress like the Turkish women, and none but an experienced eye can distinguish them from their Mahometan neighbors. They are for the most part fair and fat, and have the aquiline profile, and the large, long-fringed eyes of the Orientals; tall in stature, and of

matrönly form, when crowned with a turban they present a handsome and dignified appearance, and at the same time modest, lacking only, if anything, the bright intelligence that shines in the face of the Greek woman.

It is as easy to recognize a Greek at sight, as it is difficult to distinguish an Armenian, even setting aside the diversities of dress, so different is he in nature and aspect from the other subjects of the Empire, and especially so from the Turk. To become aware of this diversity, or rather of this contrast, it is only necessary to remark a Turk and a Greek seated side by side in a café or in a steamboat. They may be of the same age and rank, and both dressed in European fashion, and even alike in feature; but it is not possible to mistake one for the other. The Turk is motionless, and all his lineaments repose in a kind of quiet without thought, like that of a ruminating animal; and if his visage does reveal a thought, it appears as though it should be motionless like his body. He looks at no one, and gives no sign of being conscious of the observation of others; his attitude displays a profound indifference towards everybody and everything around him; his face expresses something of the resigned sadness of a slave, as well as the proud coldness of a despot; something hard, repressed, shut down, to drive to desperation any one who should attempt the impossible task of persuasion, or should try to change a resolution. He has, in short, the aspect of those men all in one piece, with whom one can live only as master, or as slave; and however long may be the time you live with them, never can become familiar. The Greek on the contrary, is very mobile, and reveals in a thousand changing expressions of life and eye

everything that is passing through his mind; he tosses his head with the movement of a spirited horse; his face expresses a sort of youthful, sometimes almost childish hauteur; if he is not observed, he puts himself forward; if he is remarked, he attitudinizes; he seems to be always seeking or fancying something; his whole person betrays vanity and ambition; and yet he is attractive, even if he looks like a worthless fellow, and you would give him your hand, if you were not willing to trust him with your purse. It is only necessary to see these two men, the Turk and the Greek, side by side, in order to comprehend that one must appear to the other simply a barbarian, a proud, brutal, overbearing creature; and on the other side, the latter must judge his neighbor to be a light man, false, malignant, and turbulent; and that they must detest each other reciprocally with all the strength of their souls, and never be able to live amicably together. The same differences are to be noted between the Greek women and the other Levantine women. Among the handsome and florid Turkish and Armenian women, who speak to the senses rather than the soul, we recognize with a sort of pleasant wonder, the elegant and pure Greek face, lighted up by eyes full of sentiment, whose every glance inspires or ought to inspire an ode; and the beautiful figures, at once slight and majestic, which inspire the wish to clasp them in one's arm, but to place upon a pedestal, rather than to shut them in a harem. There are some who still wear their hair in the ancient fashion, falling in long, rich tresses, with one thick braid wound round the head like a diadem; so beautiful, so noble, so classic, that they might be taken for statues by Praxiteles or Lysippus, or for young immortals found after twenty centuries in some un-

known valley of Laconia, or some forgotten island of the Egean. This sovereign beauty is rare however; even among the Greeks, and now-a-days almost the only examples of it are to be found among the old aristocracy of the empire, in the silent and gloomy quarter of the Fanar, where the soul of ancient Byzantium has found refuge. There may now and then still be seen one of these superb women leaning on the balustrade of a balcony, or looking through the gratings of some high window, with her eyes fixed upon the deserted street, like some captive queen; and when the lackeys of the descendants of the Paleologhi and the Comneni, do not happen to be lounging at the door, one may contemplate her for a moment, and believe that a vision of a goddess of Olympus has been revealed through the rift of a passing cloud.

THE HEBREWS.

WITH regard to the Hebrews, I can affirm, after having been in Morocco, that those of Constantinople have no connection with those on the southern coast of Africa, in whom learned observers believe they have discovered in all its purity the first Oriental type of Hebrew beauty. With the hope of discovering this beauty I armed myself with courage, and took many turns through the vast ghetta of Balata, which winds like a disgusting serpent along the shore of the Golden Horn. I pushed on even into the most wretched alleys, in the midst of houses "*grommate di muffa,*" * like the banks in the Dantesque circle, through cross ways, where I wished for stilts, and stopped my nose; I looked in windows tapestried with rags, at black and filthy rooms; I stopped before the entrances of courts, from which issued an odor fetid enough to take away my breath, making way before groups of diseased and ugly children, elbowing horrible old men, who looked like resuscitated corpses dead of the plague; stumbling over wretched dogs, and avoiding hanging clouds of dirty linen; but my courage was unrewarded. Among the many women whom I encountered, muffled in the national kalpak, a sort of lengthened turban that covers the hair and ears, I did see here and there a face in which I recognized that delicate regularity of feature, and that soft air of resignation, which are considered distinctive traits of the Jews of Constantinople; some vague profile of Rebecca or Rachel, with almond

* Encrusted with mould.

shaped eyes, full of grace and sweetness, some elegant form in Raphaelesque costume standing in a doorway with its hand upon the curly head of a child. But in general I saw nothing but signs of the degradation of the race. What a difference between these stunted figures, and those opulent forms in pompous colors, and with fiery eyes, that I admired afterwards in Tangiers and Fez. It was the same with the men, insignificant, sallow, flabby, whose vitality seemed to be centered in their eyes, trembling with avarice and cunning, restlessly rolling from side to side, as if they heard everywhere the chink of coin. And, here I expect from my good critics of Israel, who have already rapped me on the knuckles apropos of my opinion of their co-religionists of Morocco, the same strain as before, when they will ascribe the degradation and decay of the Hebrews of Constantinople to the oppressions and injustice of their Turkish rulers. But let them remember that under precisely the same conditions, political and civil, as the Hebrews, are all the other new Mussulman subjects of the Porte; and that even if this were not so, it would be exceedingly difficult to prove that the shameless uncleanliness, the precocious marriages, and the abstention from all laborious trades, considered as efficacious causes of this decadence, are a logical consequence of the want of liberty and independence. And if instead they tell me that it is not the political oppression of the Turks, but the small persecutions and contempt of all, which are the causes of this degradation, let them first ask themselves whether the contrary is not the fact; if the first reason is not rather to be sought in their customs and in their lives; and if, instead of covering up the sore, it were not better that they themselves should burn it out with hot irons.

THE BATH.

AFTER having made the tour of Balata, one may do a worse thing than visit a Turkish bath. The bath houses may be recognized by their exterior; they are windowless edifices in the form of small mosques, surmounted by a cupola, and some tall conical chimneys, which are always smoking. But before entering, it is well to think twice, and ask oneself *quid valeant humeri*, because every body cannot well support the usage to which a man is subjected within those sanitary walls. I confess, that after all that I had heard, I entered with some trepidation; and the reader will see that I was much to be pitied afterwards. As I think of it now, two large drops exude upon my temples, and wait until I shall be in the midst of my description, to run down my cheeks. The following is what happened to my unhappy self. Entering timidly, I found myself in a great hall that might have been either a theatre or a hospital. In the midst bubbled a fountain, crowned with flowers; and around the walls ran a gallery of wood in which profoundly slept or peacefully smoked, a number of Turks, stretched upon mattresses, and wrapped from head to foot in white coverings. While I looked about in search of an attendant, two athletic and half-naked mulattoes, sprung from I know not where, suddenly rose before me like two spectres, and both together pronounced in cavernous voices the word: "*Hammamun?*" (bath?) "*Evvet!*" "Yes!" replied I faintly. They signed to me to follow them,

and led me up a wooden stairway into a room full of mats and cushions, where they made me understand that I was to undress. They bound then around my body a piece of blue and white stuff, twisted a muslin scarf about my head, made me slip my feet into a pair of colossal wooden pattens, took me under the arms like a tipsy man, and conducted me, or rather transported me, into another hall, warm and dimly lighted, where they laid me down upon a carpet and waited, with their hands on their hips, until my skin should have become soft. All these preparations, which rather resembled those before an execution, filled me with anxiety, which changed to an even less honorable sentiment when my two jailors, touching me on the forehead, exchanged a significant look, which seemed to mean —can he bear it? and then, as if they had said—to the rack! took me by the arms and transported me as before into another room. Here I experienced a very strange sensation. I felt as if I were in a submarine temple. I saw vaguely, through a white vaporous veil, high marble walls, columns, arches, the vault of a dome with windows through which came beams of red, blue and green light, white phantoms that came and went along the walls, and in the middle of the room, half-naked men extended like corpses on the pavement, over whom stood other men half-naked, bending in the attitude of surgeons engaged in an autopsy. The temperature of this hall is so high that perspiration breaks out all over me, and I feel that I can only leave the place in the form of a small stream, like the lover of Arethusa.

The two mulattoes carry my body into the middle of the hall and stretch it out upon a kind of anatomical table, which

is an immense slab of white marble, raised above the pavement under which are the heating arrangements. The slab scorches me and I see stars; but I am here, and there is no help for me. The two mulattoes begin the vivisection, chanting a funeral song. They pinch my arms and legs, they press my muscles, they crack my joints, they knead me, stretch me, squeeze me; they turn me on my face and begin again; they turn me back again, and go on as before; they treat me like a paste puppet which they are trying to reduce to a certain form they have in their minds, and not succeeding, they get angry; they take breath for a moment; and then the pinchings, squeezings, and stretchings are renewed, until I think that my last hour has come. Finally, when my whole body is running with water like a squeezed sponge, when they can see the blood circulating under my skin, when they recognize that I can bear no more, they lift my remains from that bed of torture, and carry them to a corner, where in a small niche there are two copper pipes pouring hot and cold water into a marble basin. But, alas! here begins another kind of torment, and truly things assume a certain aspect, there is a certain fury of action, that without joking, I ask myself whether I had not better give a kick to the right, and another to the left, and defend myself as best I may. One of my two tormentors puts on a camel's-hair glove and begins to rub my spine, chest, arms, and legs, with the grace and lightness with which he would currycomb a horse, and the currycombing is prolonged for five minutes. This done, they deluge me with a torrent of tepid water, and take breath once more. I also breathe again, and thank heaven that it is over. But it is not over! The ferocious mulatto takes off his camel's-

hair gloves and begins again with his naked hand, and I, out of all patience, making signs to him to stop, he shows me his hand and proves, to my great amazement, that I am still in need of being rubbed. This done at last, another deluge of water and another operation. They each take a great bunch of tow, and with it cover me from head to foot with a lather of soap-suds. After this, another drenching with perfumed water and another rubbing, this time with dry tow. Being thoroughly dried by this last application of tow, they again bind the muslin round my head, put on my apron, wrap me in a sheet, reconduct me to the second hall, and after a short stoppage there, take me on to the first. Here I find a warm mattress on which I languidly stretch myself, while the two executioners of justice give me a few last pinches in order to equalize the circulation of the blood. This done they place an embroidered cushion under my head, cover me with a white cloth, put a pipe in my mouth, a glass of sherbet beside me, and leave me there fresh, light, and perfumed, with a mind serene, a contented heart, and senses so pure and full of youthful life, that I feel as if I had just risen, like Venus, from the foam of the sea, and can hear the flutter of the wings of the loves about my head.

THE TOWER OF THE SERASKIARAT.

FEELING oneself thus "pure and disposed to see again the stars," nothing can be better than to climb up to the head of that Titan in stone which is called the Tower of the Seraskiarat. I believe that if Satan should wish again to tempt any one with the offer of all the kingdoms of the earth, he would be sure of success, should he transport his victim to that point. The tower, built in the reign of Mahomet Second, is planted upon the highest of the hills of Stamboul, in the midst of the vast court of the ministry of war, at the point which the Turks call the *umbilicus* of the city. It is constructed in great part of the white marble of Marmora, upon the plan of a regular polygon of sixteen sides, and it darts upwards, bold and slender as a column, surpassing in height the gigantic minarets of the neighboring mosque of Soliman. You mount by a winding staircase, lighted by small square windows, through which you catch glimpses of Galata, Stamboul, and the suburbs of the Golden Horn; and you are but half-way up when looking out, you seem to be in the region of the clouds.

Sometimes going up, you hear a slight noise above your head, and almost at the same moment a shade passes and disappears, seeming more like an object falling than a man descending; it is one of the watchmen who watch day and night upon the summit of the tower, who has probably seen at

some distant point of the horizon a suspicious cloud of smoke, and goes to give warning at the Seraskiarat. The staircase has about two hundred steps, and leads to a kind of circular terrace, roofed, and enclosed with glass, where a watchman is always on duty, and who offers coffee to visitors. At the first entrance into that transparent cage which seems suspended between heaven and earth, at the sight of that great azure vault, and at the sound of the wind, that whistles and rattles at the glass, one is seized with vertigo, and almost tempted to renounce the panorama. But one's courage returns in a moment, and the wonderful sight draws a cry of amazement from the spectator. All Constantinople lies spread out before you, all the hills and all the valleys of Stamboul, from the castle of the Seven Towers to the cemeteries of Eyub; all Galata, and all Pera, all Scutari; three lines of cities, groves, and fleets, that lie in perspective along three enchanted shores, and other endless villages and gardens, winding about towards the interior; the whole of the Golden Horn, motionless and crystalline, dotted with innumerable caiques that look like flies swimming on the water; the whole of the Bosphorus, that appears closed in here and there by the more advanced hills of the two shores, and presents the image of a succession of lakes, and every lake is encircled by a city, and every city wreathed with gardens; [illegible] phorus the Black Sea, whose azure melts in[illegible] on the other side the Sea of Marmora, the [illegible] the Islands of the Princes, the European [illegible] white with villages; beyond again, the stra[illegible] nelles, shining like a narrow silver ribbon; [illegible] glistening whiteness, which is the Egean Sea [illegible]

which is the shore of the Troad; beyond Scutari, Bythinia and Olympus; beyond Stamboul the undulating yellow solitudes of Thrace; two gulfs, two straits, two continents, three seas, twenty cities, a myriad of silver domes and golden pinnacles, a glory of light and color, to make us doubt whether we are indeed beholding our own planet, or some star more favored of God.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

On the tower of the Seraskiarat, as on that of Galata, as on the old bridge, as at Scutari, I asked myself over and over again, —How could you fall in love with Holland? and not only that country, but Paris, Madrid, Seville, appeared to me dark and melancholy cities, in which I could not have lived a month. Then I thought of my poor attempts at description, and regretfully I muttered:—Ah! unfortunate man! How many times have you misused the words beautiful—immense—splendid! And now what have you to say of this spectacle? But now it seemed to me that I could not write a page about Constantinople. And my friend Rossasco said to me:—But why not try? and I answered him—But I have nothing to say! and sometimes, who would believe it? that spectacle, for a few seconds, at certain hours, in certain lights, appeared poor and mean, and I exclaimed, almost with dismay,—Oh, where is my Constantinople? At other times I was seized by a feeling of sadness at the thought that while I was there in presence of that immensity of loveliness, my mother was in her little chamber from which she could see nothing but an ugly court and a strip of sky; and it seemed my fault, and I would have given an eye to have the good old lady on my arm, conducting her to Santa Sofia. The days, however, flew by light and joyous as an hour of happiness. And on the rare occasions when the black cloud fell

upon me, my friend and I knew how to dissipate it. We went down to Galata in two two-oared caiques, the brightest colored and most gilded to be found, and calling out Eyub! we were at once in the middle of the Golden Horn. Our rowers were named Mahmoud, Bajazet, Ibrahim, Murad; they were each about twenty years old, and had two arms of iron, rowing like mad, and exciting each other with cries and boyish laughter; the sky was serene, and the sea transparent; we threw our heads back and took long deep draughts of the perfumed air, while we dipped our hands in the water; the two caiques flew, and on either side fled by kiosks and palaces, gardens and mosques; we seemed to be flying before the wind through an enchanted region, we felt an inexpressible pleasure in being young, and at Stamboul, Yank sang, I recited Victor Hugo's Oriental Ballads, and saw, now to the right, now to the left, now near, now far off, floating in the air, a beloved face, crowned with silver hair and illuminated by a soft smile, which said:—Be happy, my son! I follow thee with a benediction!

SANTA SOFIA.

AND now if a poor travelling scribbler may invoke a muse, do I invoke her with joined hands, because my mind wanders "before the noble subject," and the grand lines of the Byzantine basilica tremble before me like an image reflected in rippling water. May the muse inspire me, Saint Sophia illuminate me, and the Emperor Justinian pardon me!

One fine morning in October, accompanied by a Turkish *cavass* from the Italian consulate, and a Greek dragoman, we finally went to visit the "terrestrial paradise, the second firmament, the car of the cherubim, the throne of the glory of God, the marvel of the earth, the largest temple in the world after Saint Peter's." Which last sentence, as my friends of Burgos, Cologne, Milan, Florence, know, is not my own, and I should not dare to claim it; but I have cited it with the others, because it is one of the many expressions consecrated by the enthusiasm of the Greeks, that our dragoman kept constantly repeating. We had chosen, together with a Turkish cavass, an old Greek dragoman, with the hope, not delusive, of hearing in their explanations and in their legends, the two religions, the two histories, the two peoples, speaking together; and that while one would exalt the church, the other would glorify the mosque, so as to show Santa Sofia in the way she should be seen, with one Turkish and one Christian eye.

My expectation was great and my curiosity intense; yet as I went along, I thought as I think now, that there exists no monument, however famous, or however worthy of its fame, the sight of which moves the soul with so vivid and acute a pleasure, as is given by the anticipation when going to see it. If I were to live over again any hour of those that I have spent in seeing some renowned work of man, I should choose that one between the moment when some one said, "Let us go!" and that when we arrived before it. The happiest hours in travelling are those. While on the way, your soul expands in the effort to contain the sentiment of admiration which is about to enter it; you remember your youthful desires that then were only dreams; you see again your old professor of geography, who after having pointed out Constantinople on the map of Europe, traces in the air, with a pinch of snuff in his fingers, the lines of the great basilica; you remember the room, and the fire-place, before which, the preceding winter, the monument was described to a wondering and silent circle; the name of Santa Sofia seems to resound in your ears and in your heart, like that of some living being who expects and calls you in order to reveal to you some great secret; above your head appear arches and columns of a prodigious edifice that seems to lose itself in the clouds; and when you are near it, you feel an inexpressible pleasure in delaying for one moment, to lose a little time, to retard for an instant that event in your life for which you have longed for twenty years and which you will remember forever. So that there remains but very little of the celebrated pleasures of admiration if the sentiments that precede and follow it are taken away. It is almost always an illusion,

followed by an awakening from which we, obstinate as we are, bring forth other delusions.

The mosque of Saint Sophia stands opposite the principal entrance of the old Seraglio. The first object, however, which attracts the eye upon arriving in the square, is not the mosque, but the famous fountain of Sultan Ahmed Third.

It is one of the richest and most original of the monuments of Turkish art. But, more than a monument, it is a jewel in marble, that a gallant Sultan placed on the forehead of his Stamboul, in a moment of affection. I believe that none but a woman can describe it. My pen is not fine enough to trace its image. It does not look like a fountain at first. It is in the form of a square temple, with a Chinese roof, extending its undulating border far beyond the walls, and giving it a pagoda-like appearance. At each of the four angles there is a small round tower, furnished with little grated windows, or rather four charming kiosks, corresponding to which there are, upon the roof, four slender cupolas, each one surmounted by a graceful pinnacle; the whole encircling a larger cupola in the midst. On each of the four sides there is an elegant niche with a pointed arch, and in each niche a jet of water falling into a small basin. An inscription runs all round the edifice to the following effect: "This fountain speaks to you in the verses of Sultan Ahmed; turn the key of this pure and tranquil spring and invoke the name of God; drink of this inexhaustible and limpid water and pray for the Sultan." The little edifice is all of white marble, which is scarcely visible under the multiplicity of ornaments that cover the walls; there are little arches, little niches, little columns, rosettes, polygons, ribbons, embroidery in marble,

gilding on blue ground, fringes around the cupolas, carvings under the roof, mosaics of many colors, arabesques of many forms. There is not a space as big as a hand that is not carved, and gilded and embroidered. It is a prodigy of grace, richness and patience, to be kept under a glass shade; a thing made apparently not only for the eye, but which must have a taste, an odor of its own; a jewel case, that one would like to open, and discover some pearl of price enshrined within. Time has in part dimmed the gilding, blurred the colors, and rusted the marble. What must this colossal jewel have been when first unveiled to the eye, a hundred and sixty years ago? But old and faded as it is, it still holds the first place among all the smaller marvels of Constantinople; and it is besides a thing so entirely Turkish, that it fixes itself forever in the memory among the crowd of objects that rise before the eye of the mind, at the name of Stamboul.

From the fountain is seen the mosque of Saint Sophia, filling up one side of the square.

The external aspect has nothing worthy of note. The only objects that attract the eye, are the four high white minarets that rise at the four corners of the edifice, upon pedestals as big as houses. The famous cupola looks small. It appears impossible that it can be the same dome that swells into the blue air, like the head of a Titan, and is seen from Pera, from the Bosphorus, from the Sea of Marmora, and from the hills of Asia. It is a flattened dome, flanked by two half domes, covered with lead, and perforated with a wreath of windows, supported upon four walls painted in stripes of pink and white, sustained in their turn by enormous bastions, around which rise confusedly

a number of small mean buildings, baths, schools, mausoleums, hospitals, etc., which hide the architectural forms of the basilica. You see nothing but a heavy, irregular mass, of a faded color, naked as a fortress, and not to all appearance large enough to hold within it the immense nave of Saint Sophia's church. Of the ancient basilica nothing is really visible but the dome, which has lost the silvery splendor that once made it visible, according to the Greeks, from the summit of Olympus. All the rest is Mussulman. One summit was built by Mahomet the Conqueror, one by Selim II., the other two by Amurath III. Of the same Amurath are the buttresses built at the end of the sixteenth century to support the walls shaken by an earthquake, and the enormous crescent in bronze planted upon the top of the dome, of which the gilding alone cost fifty thousand ducats. The antique atrium has disappeared; the baptistery was converted into a mausoleum for Mustafa and Ibrahim I.; almost all the smaller edifices annexed to the Greek church were either destroyed, or hidden by new walls, or transformed so as not to be recognizable.

On every side the mosque overwhelms and masks the church, of which the head only is free, though over that also the four imperial minarets keep watch and ward. On the eastern side there is a door ornamented by six columns of porphyry and marble; at the southern side another door by which you enter a court, surrounded by low, irregular buildings, in the midst of which bubbles a fountain for ablution, covered by an arched roof with eight columns. Looked at from without, Saint Sophia can scarcely be distinguished from the other mosques of Stamboul, unless by its inferior lightness and white-

ness; much less would it pass for the "greatest temple in the world after St. Peter's."

Our guides conducted us, by a narrow way that ran along the northern side of the edifice, to a bronze door, through which we entered the vestibule. This vestibule, which is a very long and very lofty hall, lined with marble and with some of the ancient mosaics still glittering here and there, gives access to the nave of the eastern side by nine doors, and on the opposite side it formerly opened by five doors on another vestibule, which by thirteen doors communicated with the atrium. As soon as we had crossed the threshold, we showed our entrance firman to a turbaned sacristan, put on the slippers, and at a sign from the guide, advanced to the central door of the eastern side, that stood open to receive us. The first effect of the nave is really grand and new. The eye embraces an enormous vault, a bold architecture of half-domes that seem suspended in the air, measureless pilasters, gigantic arches, colossal columns, galleries, tribunes, and porticoes, upon all of which a flood of light descends from a thousand great windows; there is a something rather scenic and princely than sacred; an ostentation of grandeur and force, an air of mundane elegance, a confusion of classic, barbarous, capricious, presumptuous, and magnificent; a grand harmony, in which, with the thundering and formidable note of the cyclopean arches and pilasters, there are mingled the gentle and low strain of the Oriental canticle, the clamorous music of the feasts of Justinian and Heraclitus, echoes of pagan songs, faint voices of an effeminate and worn-out race, and distant cries of Goth and Vandal; there is a faded majesty, a sinister nudity, a profound peace; an idea of the basilica of

St. Peter contracted and toned down, and of St. Mark's grosser, larger and deserted; a mixture heretofore unseen of temple, church, and mosque, of severity and puerility, of ancient things and modern, of ill-assorted colors, and odd, bizaare ornaments; a spectacle, in short, which at once astonishes and displeases, and leaves the mind for a moment uncertain, seeking the right word to express and affirm its thought.

The edifice is constructed upon an almost equilateral rectangle, from the centre of which rises the principal dome, upheld by four great arches supported upon four very lofty pilasters, that form, as it were, the skeleton of the building. Upon the two arches, which face you as you enter are placed two large half-domes which cover the whole of the nave, and each of these opens into two other smaller half-domes, which form four small round temples within the great one. Between the two temples opposite the entrance opens the apse, also covered by a vault of one-fourth of a sphere. There are then seven half-domes which surround the principal dome, two beneath it, and five below those two, without any apparent support, so that they present an aspect of extraordinary lightness, and seem indeed, as a Greek poet has written, to be suspended by seven invisible threads from the vault of heaven. All these domes are lighted by large arched windows of great symmetry. Between the four enormous pilasters which form a square in the middle of the basilica, rise, to the right and left as you enter, eight marvellous columns of green breccia from which spring the most graceful arches, sculptured with foliage, forming an elegant portico on either side of the nave, and sustaining at a great height two vast galleries, which present two more ranges

of columns and sculptured arches. A third gallery which communicates with the two first, runs along the entire side where the entrance is, and opens upon the nave with three great arches, sustained by twin columns. Other minor galleries, supported by porphyry columns, cross the four temples posted at the extremity of the nave, and sustain other columns bearing tribunes. This is the basilica. The mosque is, as it were, planted in its bosom and attached to its walls. The Mirab, or niche which indicates the direction of Mecca, is cut in one of the pilasters of the apse. To the right of it and high up is hung one of the four carpets which Mahomet used in prayer. Upon the corner of the apse nearest the Mirab, at the top of a very steep little staircase, flanked by two balustrades of marble sculptured with exquisite delicacy, under an odd conical roof, between two triumphal standards of Mahomet Second, is the pulpit where the Ratib goes up to read the Koran, with a drawn scimetar in his hand, to indicate that Santa Sofia is a mosque acquired by conquest. Opposite the pulpit is the tribune of the Sultan, closed with a gilded lattice. Other pulpits or platforms, furnished with balustrades sculptured in open work, and ornamented with small marble columns and arabesque arches, extend here and there along the walls, or project towards the centre of the nave. To the right and left of the entrance, are two enormous alabaster urns, brought from the ruins of Pergamo, by Amurath Third. Upon the pilasters, at a great height, are suspended immense green disks, with inscriptions from the Koran in letters of gold. Underneath, attached to the walls, are large cartouches of porphyry inscribed with the names of Allah, Mahomet, and the first four Caliphs. In the

angles formed by the four arches that sustain the cupola, may still be seen the gigantic wings of four mosaic cherubim, whose faces are concealed by gilded rosettes. From the vaults of the domes depend innumerable thick silken cords, to which are attached ostrich eggs, bronze lamps, and globes of crystal. Here and there are seen lecterns, inlaid with mother of pearl and copper, with manuscript Korans upon them. The pavement is covered with carpets and mats. The walls are bare, whitish, yellowish, or dark grey, still ornamented here and there with faded mosaics. The general aspect is gloomy and sad.

The chief marvel of the mosque is the great dome. Looked at from the nave below, it seems indeed, as Madame de Stael said of the dome of St. Peter's, like an abyss suspended over one's head. It is immensely high, has an enormous circumference, and its depth is only one-sixth of its diameter; which makes it appear still larger. At its base a gallery encircles it, and above the gallery there is a row of forty arched windows. In the top is written the sentence pronounced by Mahomet Second, as he sat on his horse in front of the high altar on the day of the taking of Constantinople: "Allah is the light of heaven and of earth;" and some of the letters, which are white upon a black ground, are nine yards long. As every one knows, this aerial prodigy could not be constructed with the usual materials; and it was built of pumice stone that floats on water, and with bricks from the island of Rhodes, five of which scarcely weigh as much as one ordinary brick. In each brick was written the sentence of David: *Deus in medio eius non commovebitur. Adiuvabit eam Deus vultu suo.* At every twelfth row of bricks, holy relics were built in. While the workmen labored, the

priests were chanting; Justinian in a linen tunic was present; and an immense crowd looked on in admiring wonder. And we need not be astonished when we think that the construction of this second firmament, so marvellous even in our day, was in the sixth century a thing without example. The vulgar believed that it was upheld by enchantment, and the Turks, for a long time after the conquest, when they were praying in the mosque, had much ado to keep their faces towards the east and not turn them upwards to "the stone sky."

The dome, in fact, covers almost the half of the nave, so that it dominates and lights the whole edifice, and a segment of it may be seen from every side; whichever way you may turn, you always find yourself beneath it, and your eye and mind rise and float within its circle with a pleasurable sensation, almost like that of flying.

When you have visited the nave and the dome you have only begun to see Saint Sophia. For example, whoever has a shade of historic curiosity may dedicate an hour to the columns. Here are the spoils of all the temples in the world. The columns of green *breccia* which support the two great galleries, were presented to Justinian by the magistrates of Ephesus, and belonged to the temple of Diana that was burned by Erostratus. The eight porphyry columns that stand two and two between the pilasters belonged to the Temple of the Sun built by Aurelian at Balbek. Other columns are from the Temple of Jove at Cizicum, from the temple of Helios of Palmyra, from the temples of Thebes, Athens, Rome, the Troad, the Ciclades, and from Alexandria; and they present an infinite variety of sizes and colors. Among the columns, the balustrades, the pedes-

tals, and the slabs which remain of the ancient lining of the walls, may be seen marbles from all the mines of the Archipelago, from Asia Minor, from Africa and from Gaul. The marble of the Bosphorus, white, spotted with black, contrasts with the black Celtic marble veined with white; the green marble of Laconia is reflected in the azure marble of Lybia; the speckled porphyry of Egypt, the starred granite of Thessaly, the red and white striped stone of Jassy, mingle their colors with the purple of the Phrygian marble, the rose of that of Synada, the gold of the marble of Mauritania and the snow of the marble of Paros.

To this variety of colors must be added the indescribable variety of the forms of friezes, cornices, rosettes, balustrades, capitals of an odd Corinthian style, in which animals, leaves, crosses and chimeras are all woven together, and others which belong to no order, fantastic in design and unequal in size, coupled together by chance; and shafts of columns and pedestals ornamented with capricious carvings, worn by time and chipped by the scimetar; which altogether present a strange aspect of magnificence and barbarous disorder, and are the scorn of good taste, although one cannot take one's eyes from them.

Standing in the nave, however, one cannot comprehend the vastness of the mosque. The nave, in fact, is but a small part of the whole. The two porticoes that sustain the lateral galleries are two large edifices by themselves alone, out of which two temples might be made. Each of them is divided into three parts, separated by very high arches. Columns, architraves, pilasters, vaults, all are enormous. Walking under these lofty arcades, the great nave, looking like another basilica, can hardly

be seen between the interstices of the columns of the temple of Ephesus. The same effect is observed from the galleries, to which you mount by a spiral staircase of very slight inclination, or rather not a staircase, since there are no steps, but an ascending way, by which a man on horseback could easily go. The galleries were the *ginecco*, or the part of the church reserved for women; the penitents remained in the vestibule, and the common crowd of the faithful in the nave. Each gallery could contain the population of a suburb of Constantinople. You do not feel as if you were in a church, but rather appear to be walking in some Titanic theatre, where at any moment may burst forth a chorus of a hundred thousand voices. To see the mosque, you should approach the balustrade and look over, and then all its grandeur appears. Arches, vaults, pilasters, all are gigantic. The green disks that looked as if you could span them with your arms, would here cover a house. The windows are the portals of palaces; the wings of the cherubim are sails of ships; the tribunals are public squares; the dome makes your head swim. Casting down your eyes, you find another wonder. You did not know you had gone up so high. The floor of the nave is at the bottom of an abyss, and the pulpits, the urns of Pergamo, the mats, the lamps, have all grown singularly little. You see at the same time from this point a curious peculiarity of the mosque of Saint Sophia, and that is, that the nave does not lie precisely in the direction of Mecca, towards which the Mussulman must turn in prayer, and consequently, all the mats and praying carpets are disposed obliquely to the lines of the edifice, and offend the eye like a gross error in perspective. From above can be embraced at once with the eye

and mind all the life of the mosque. There are to be seen Turks on their knees, with their foreheads touching the pavement; others erect like statues with their hands before their faces, as if they were studying the lines in their palms; some seated cross-legged at the base of columns, as if they were reposing under the shadow of trees; a veiled woman on her knees in a solitary corner; old men seated before the lecterns, reading the Koran; an *imaum* hearing a group of boys reciting sacred verses; and here and there, under the distant arcades and in the galleries, imaum, ratib, muezzin, servants of the mosque in strange costumes, coming and going silently as if they did not touch the pavement. The vague harmony formed by the low, monotonous voices of those reading or praying, those thousand strange lamps, that clear and equal light, that deserted apse, those vast silent galleries, that immensity, those memories, that peace, leave in the soul an impression of mystery and grandeur which words cannot express, nor time efface.

But at bottom, as I have said, it is a sad impression, and verifies the great poet who likened the mosque of Saint Sophia to a "colossal sepulchre," because on every side were visible the traces of a horrid devastation, exciting more regret for what has been, than admiration for what is. The first feeling of amazement over, the mind turns irresistibly to the past. And even now, after three years, I cannot recall the image of the great mosque without its representing to me instead, the church. I pull down the Mussulman pulpits, take away the lamps and urns, remove the disks and the porphyry cartouches, re-open the walled up windows and doors, scrape off the white-wash from the walls and ceilings, and behold the basilica new

and entire, as it was thirteen centuries ago, when Justinian exclaimed: "Glory to God, who has judged me worthy to complete this work! Solomon, I have surpassed thee!" Everywhere that the eye is turned, every thing shines, sparkles, lightens as in the enchanted regions of legends. The great walls, lined with precious marbles, send back reflections of gold, of ivory, of steel, of coral, of mother-of-pearl; the innumerable veins and spots upon the marble assume the aspect of crowns and garlands of flowers; the infinite mosaics of crystal give to the walls, when a ray of sun falls upon them, the appearance of being encrusted silver set with diamonds. The capitals, the cornices, the doors, the friezes of the arches are all of gilded bronze. The vaults of portico and gallery are painted with colossal figures of saints and angels in a golden field. In front of the pilasters, in the chapels, beside the doors, among the columns, stand statues of marble and of bronze, enormous candelabras of massive gold, gigantic evangelists bending above reading desks resplendent as the chairs of kings, high ivory crosses, vases shining with pearls. At the bottom of the nave there is a confused lustre as of something in flames. It is the balustrade of the choir, in gilded bronze; it is the pulpit, encrusted with forty thousand pounds of silver, which cost the sum of one year's tribute from Egypt; it is the seats of seven priests, the throne of the patriarch, the emperor's throne, sculptured, inlaid, set with pearls, so that when the light strikes full upon them, the eyes are dazzled and cannot see them. Beyond this splendor in the apse, there is a yet greater magnificence. It is the altar, of which the table, supported on four golden columns, is made of gold, silver, pewter and pearls all melted to-

gether ; and the pyx formed of four columns of massive silver, surmounted by a globe and cross of gold weighing two hundred and sixty pounds. Behind the altar rises a gigantic figure of the divine Wisdom that touches the vault of the apse with its head and the floor with its feet. Over all these treasures soar aloft the seven half domes covered with mosaics in gold and crystal, and the great central dome upon which are the immeasurable forms of apostles and evangelists, the Virgin and the Cross, all glittering with gold and colors like jewels and flowers. And all are mirrored in the pavement of polished marbles. Such was the interior of the basilica. But we must imagine also the great atrium, surrounded by columns, and walls lined with mosaic and ornamented with marble fountains and equestrian statues ; the tower, from which thirty-two bells made their formidable voices echo to the seven hills ; the hundred doors of bronze decorated with bas reliefs, and inscriptions in silver ; the halls of the synods, the halls of the emperor, the prisms of the priests, the baptistery, the vast sacristy filled with treasures, and a labyrinth of vestibules, of tricliniums, of corridors, of hidden staircases that wound about in the thickness of the walls and led to tribunes and secret oratories. Now we may imagine the picture presented by such a basilica on the grand occasions of imperial marriages, councils, coronations ; when from the enormous palaces of the Cæsars, through streets lined with columns and strewn with myrtle and flowers, perfumed with myrrh and incense, and hung with silk and gold, amid the clamors of heralds and the songs of poets, the emperor advanced, wearing the tiara surmounted by a cross and bejewelled like an idol, seated upon a golden car drawn by two white mules, and sur-

rounded by a brilliant court. Then the clergy of the basilica in all their pomp met him in the atrium, and all that glittering crowd burst by twenty-seven doors, into the illuminated church.

After having made in silence several tours about the mosque, we allowed our guides to speak, who began by showing us the chapels placed beneath the galleries, and despoiled of every thing, like every other part of the basilica. Some of them serve as treasuries, in which Turks who are starting on a long journey, or who are in fear of robbers, deposit their money and their precious objects, and often leave them there for years, under God's guard; others, enclosed by a wall, are converted into infirmaries, in which some idiot, or man sick of an incurable disease, awaits release by cure or death, and from time to time makes the mosque ring with lamentable cries, or childish laughter. They now re-conduct us into the middle of the nave and the Greek dragoman begins to recount the marvels of the basilica. The design, it is true, was traced by the architects Antemius of Tralles and Isidoro of Miletus; but an angel inspired the first conception of it. It was an angel also who suggested to Justinian to cause three windows to be opened in the apse, which should represent the three persons of the Trinity. Thus also the hundred and seven columns of the church represent the hundred and seven columns which sustain the house of Wisdom. Seven years were occupied in gathering together the materials for the construction of the edifice. One hundred chief superintendents directed the work, and ten thousand laborers were under them, five thousand on one side, and five thousand on the other. The walls were only a few palms high when already more than four hundred and fifty quintals of gold

had been spent. The total cost of the building alone amounted to twenty-five millions of francs. The church was consecrated by the Patriarch, five years, eleven months and ten days after the first stone was laid, and Justinian ordered on that occasion sacrifices, feasts, distributions of money and food, which lasted two weeks.

Here the Turkish cavass struck in, and pointed out the pilaster upon which Sultan Mahmoud the Second, when he entered a conqueror into Saint Sophia, left the bloody impress of his right hand as if to seal his victory. Then he showed us, near the *Mirab*, the so-called *cold window*, from which a fresh air is always blowing, which inspires the greatest preachers of Islam with the most moving discourses. He pointed out, at another window, the famous *resplendent stone*, which is a slab of diaphonous marble, which glows like a piece of crystal when struck by the rays of the sun. On the left of the entrance on the north side is the *sweating column:* a column covered with bronze, through an aperture in which can be seen the marble always moist. And finally he showed a concave block of marble, brought from Bethlehem, in which, it is said, was laid, as soon as he was born, Sidi Yssa, "the son of Mary, the apostle of God, the spirit that proceeds from Him, and merits honor in this world and the next." But it seemed to me that neither the Turk nor the Greek believed much in this. The dragoman now took up the tale, passing before a walled-up door in the gallery, to relate the celebrated legend of the bishop, and this time he spoke with conviction, which if not genuine, was well put on. At the moment when the Turks broke into the church of Saint Sophia, a Greek bishop was saying mass before the

high altar. At the sight of the invaders he abandoned the altar, went into the gallery, and disappeared through this little door before the eyes of the pursuing soldiers, who instantly found themselves stopped by a stone wall. They began to pound furiously upon the wall; but only succeeded in leaving the marks of their weapons upon it; masons were called; but after having worked for a whole day with pick and mattock, were obliged to renounce the task; all the masons in Constantinople tried their hands at it, and all failed to open a breach in the miraculous wall. But that wall will open; it will open on the day when the profaned basilica shall be restored to Christian worship, and then the Greek bishop will issue forth, dressed in his pontifical habit, with the chalice in his hand, with a radiant countenance, and mounting the steps of the high altar, he will resume the mass at the exact point where he left off; and on that day the dawn of new centuries shall shine resplendent for Constantinople.

As we were going out, the Turkish sacristan, who had followed us about in a dawdling, yawning way, gave me a handful of pieces of mosaic which he had picked out that moment from the wall, and the dragoman, stopping in the doorway, began the recital, which I took down from his lips, of the profanation of the basilica.

Hardly had the news spread, towards seven in the morning, that the Turks had passed the walls, when an immense crowd fled for refuge to Saint Sophia. There were about a hundred thousand persons; soldiers, monks, priests, senators, thousands of virgins fleeing from the convents, patrician families with their treasures, great dignitaries of the state, and princes of

the imperial house, rushing through the galleries and the nave, and hiding themselves in all the recesses of the edifice. Mingled with them came the refuse of the people; slaves, malefactors vomited from the prisons and the galleys, and the whole church resounded with their shrieks of terror, as when a crowded theatre is invaded by the flames. When the nave, the galleries, and the vestibules were all packed full, the doors were closed and barred, and to the horrible din of the first moments succeeded a frightened silence. Many still believed that the conquerors would not dare to profane the church of Saint Sophia; others awaited in stupid security the apparition of the angel, announced by the prophets, who should exterminate the Mussulman army before the advance guard should arrive at the pillar of Constantine; others, mounted upon the inner gallery of the dome, watched from the windows the advancing danger and made signs to the hundred thousand pallid faces that looked up at them from the church below. They could see from thence an immense white cloud that covered the walls from the Blachernе to the gilded gate; and from that point four glittering lines advancing through the streets like four lava torrents, widening and roaring in the midst of smoke and flame. They were the four assaulting columns of the Turkish army, driving before them in disorder the advance guard of the Greeks, and spreading, pillaging, burning, as they came on towards Saint Sophia, the Hippodrome, and the Imperial palace. When the vanguard arrived upon the second hill, the blare of trumpets was suddenly heard, and the terrified crowd in the church fell on their knees. But even in that moment many still believed in the apparition of the angel, and others hoped that a sentiment of

respect and awe would arrest the invaders before that immense edifice consecrated to God. But this last delusion soon vanished. The trumpets sounded nearer, a confused noise of arms and shouting burst into the church through its thousand windows, and in a moment the first blows of the Mussulman axes were heard upon the bronze doors of the vestibules. Then that great throng felt the chill of death upon them, and recommended themselves to God. The doors gave way, a savage horde of janissaries, spahis, timmariots, dervishes, sciaus, black with powder and blood, transfigured by the fury of battle, by rapine, and violence of every kind, appeared in the openings. At the first sight of the great nave and all its splendid treasures, there was a shout of wonder and delight; and then the dreadful torrent rolled on its furious course. One part fell upon the women, upon the nobles, precious slaves, who stupid with terror held out their arms for the cord and chain; the rest rushed for the treasures of the church. The tabernacles were pillaged, the statues overthrown, the ivory crucifixes smashed to atoms; the mosaics, believed to be gems, dug out by the scimetars, fell in sparkling showers into caftans and cloaks held out to catch them; the pearls of the sacred vessels, picked out by the points of daggers, rolled about the pavements, pursued like living things, and disputed for with fury; the high altar was dispersed into a thousand fragments of gold and silver; the seats, the thrones, the pulpits, the balustrades, vanished as if destroyed by an avalanche of stone. And on, in bloody waves, came unceasingly the Asiatic hordes; and soon nothing could be seen but a whirling throng of drunken robbers, many wrapped in sacerdotal robes and wearing mitres on their heads, waving in

the air their spoils of chalices and sacred vessels, dragging along files of slaves bound together with pontifical girdles, and in the midst camels and horses laden with booty, slipping upon the pavement encumbered with broken statues, and scattered relics of saints; a wild and sacrilegious orgy, accompanied by a horrible sound made up of shouts of triumph, threats, yells of pain, shrieks of women and girls, and the blare of trumpets; until suddenly all is still, and upon the threshold of the great portal appears Mahomet the Second on horseback, surrounded by a group of princes, viziers, and generals, superb and impassible as the living image of God's vengeance, and rising in his stirrups, he launches into the devastated basilica, with a resounding voice, the first formula of the new religion:—"Allah is the light of heaven and of earth!"

DOLMA BAGTCHE.

EVERY Friday the Sultan goes to pray in one of the mosques of Constantinople. We saw him one day as he was going to the mosque of Abdul-Medjid, on the European shore of the Bosphorus, near the imperial palace of Dolma Bagtché.

To go to Dolma Bagtché from Galata, you pass through the populous quarter of Top-hané, between a vast arsenal and a great cannon-foundry; you thread the Mussulman suburb of Funduché, which occupies the site of the ancient Aïanteon, and come out upon a spacious square, open towards the sea, beyond which, along the shore of the Bosphorus, rises the famous residence of the Sultans. It is the largest marble môle that is reflected in the waters of the strait from Seraglio Point to the mouth of the Black Sea, and it is only possible to get a view of the whole of it from a boat. The façade, which is nearly half an Italian mile in length, is turned towards Asia, and can be seen for a great distance, shining white between the blue of the sea, and the dark green of the hill. It is not properly a palace, because the architecture is not that of one unique conception; the different parts are unconnected, and there is a confusion of styles, the Arabic, Greek, Gothic, Turkish, Roman, and Renaissance, all mingled together; it presents the majestic appearance of the royal palaces of Europe, as well as the almost feminine graces of the Moorish buildings of Seville and

Granada. Instead of "palace," it might be called "the Imperial City," like that of the Emperor of China; and the more, that by its vastness, and by its form, it seems as if it should be inhabited not by monarch only, but by the royal brothers or friends who passed their time in idleness and pleasure. From the Bosphorus it presents a series of façades of temples or theatres, upon which there is such an indescribable profusion of ornaments, that they seem thrown, as a Turkish poet says, by the hand of a madman; and they remind one of those fabulous pagodas of India, which fatigue the eye at the first glance, and seem the images of the infinite caprices of the licentious princes who dwell within their walls.

There are rows of Doric and Ionic columns, light as lances; windows framed in festoons with little fluted columns; arches made of leaves and flowers, that curve above doors worked in delicate tracery; charming balconies with openwork parapets; trophies, rosettes, and brackets; intertwined and knotted garlands; marble caprices playing about the cornices, around the windows, and about the medallions in relief; a network of arabesques extending from the doors to the roofs, a magnificence and perfection of architectural ornament that gives to each of the smaller palaces, of which the great multiform edifice is composed, the appearance of having been carved and chased by the engraver's hand. It seems impossible that a quiet Armenian architect could have conceived it; but rather that some enamored Sultan must have dreamed it, and offered it to the most ambitious of his beauties. In front stretches a row of monumental pilasters, united by gilded railings, which represent a delicate interlacing of flowering branches, and which, seen

from a distance, look like curtains of lace that the wind might carry away. Long flights of marble steps descend from the gates to the water, and hide themselves in the sea. Everything is white, fresh, and neat as if the palace had been finished but yesterday. An artistic eye might discern a thousand errors of harmony or taste; but the whole effect is very rich and splendid, and the first aspect of that array of snow-white royal buildings, enamelled like jewels, crowded with verdure, reflected in the water, leaves an impression of power, mystery and beauty, that almost effaces the recollection of the Old Seraglio. Those who have had the good fortune to penetrate within those walls, say that the interior corresponds to the exterior; that there are long suites of rooms painted in fresco with fanciful subjects and glowing colors; doors of cedar and mahogany carved and gilded, which open upon interminable corridors illuminated by a soft light, by which you pass into other rooms lighted by small domes of crimson glass, and bath rooms which seem dug out of a single block of Parian marble; and from these to airy terraces, that hang above mysterious gardens and groves of cypresses and roses, through which, by long perspectives of Moorish porticoes, can be seen the azure of the sea; and windows, terraces, balconies, kiosks, all are resplendent with flowers, and everywhere water sparkles and falls in vaporous veils over verdure or marble, and from every side open divine views of the Bosphorus, whose invigorating air spreads through all the recesses of the royal pile a delicious freshness from the sea.

On the side towards Funduché there is a monumental and highly ornamented gate; through this gate the Sultan comes to

cross the square. There is no other monarch of the earth who has such a square by which to make a solemn progress from his palace. Standing at the foot of the hill, the gate of the palace can be seen on the side, looking like a triumphal arch; on the other side is the graceful mosque of Abdul-Medjid, flanked by two pretty minarets; in front the Bosphorus; beyond, the hills of Asia, green, and dotted with infinite colors of kiosks, palaces, mosques and villas, giving them the aspect of a great city, decked for a festival; farther on, the smiling majesty of Scutari with her crown of cypresses; and between the two shores a continual passing and repassing of ships, war vessels with banners flying, small steamers crowded with people, looking as if they were filled with flowers. Asiatic boats of strange and antique forms, launched from the Seraglio, private boats, and flocks of birds skimming the water; a scene of such beauty, and life, and joyousness, that the stranger who stands awaiting the appearance of the Imperial cortège, can only imagine a Sultan as handsome as an angel, and as serene as a boy.

For half an hour already, there had been stationed in the square, two companies of Zouaves, whose duty it was to keep the way open for the passage of the Sultan, and a thousand or so of curious spectators. Nothing is more odd than the varieties of people who assemble on such occasions. Here and there were standing some splendid coaches of Turkish ladies "of the high aristocracy" within, guarded by gigantic eunuchs on horseback, motionless, on either side; a few English ladies in hired open carriages; several groups of travellers, with opera-glasses slung by straps over their shoulders, among whom I recognized the conquering Count of the hotel of Byzantium, come perhaps

cruel man! to transfix with one triumphant glance, his potent and unhappy rival. Among the crowd were a few hirsute figures with albums under their arms, who might be artists come to make a furtive sketch of the Imperial countenance. Near the band of music was a handsome French woman, dressed very conspicuously, bold of aspect, and of attitude, and in front of everybody, whom I took to be a cosmopolitan adventuress, come there to catch the Sultan's eye, for I thought I read in her face "the trembling joy of a great purpose." There were a few of those old Turks, suspicious and fanatical subjects, who never miss seeing their Sultan when he comes forth, because they wish to be assured by the evidence of their own senses, that he is alive and well for the glory and prosperity of the universe; and the Sultan appears punctually every Friday, to give his people ocular proof of his existence, for it might happen as it has happened more than once, that his natural or violent death should be kept secret by some court conspiracy. There were mendicants, Mussulman dandies, eunuchs, and dervishes. Among these last I remarked an old man, tall and spare, with terrible eyes, motionless, who kept his look fixed upon the palace gate with a most sinister expression. I fancied him awaiting the Sultan thus, that he might plant himself in his path, and yell in his face, like the dervish in the *Orientale* to Pashà Ali of Tepeleni:—"Thou art nothing but a dog and an accursed one!" But there has been no new example of such sublime audacity since the famous sabre stroke of Mahmoud. There were also sundry groups of Turkish women standing apart, looking like masqueraders, and the usual assemblage of theatrical supernumeraries that make up a crowd in Constantinople.

At the time of which I write, the eccentricities of Abdul Aziz were already being spoken of. His insatiable avidity for money was known and discussed. The people said:—"Mahmoud the lover of blood, Abdul Medjid the lover of women, Abdul Aziz the lover of gold." All the hopes that had been founded upon him, when as Imperial prince he had struck down an ox with his fist, saying, "Thus will I kill barbarisms," had long since vanished. The tendencies to a simple and severe manner of life, of which he had given proof in the first years of his reign, having, as it was said, but one wife, and inexorably restricting the enormous expenses of the Seraglio, were only memories. Perhaps years upon years had gone by since he had given up those studies of legislation, of military science and European literature, for which he had been so renowned, as if in him reposed every hope for the regeneration of the Empire. For a long time now he had thought only of himself. Every moment rumors crept out of his wrath against the minister of finance, who would not, or could not supply all the money that he wanted. At the first word of expostulation, he would launch the first object that came to his hand at the head of his unfortunate Excellency, reciting with what voice remained to him, the antique formula of the imperial oath: "By the God that created the heavens and the earth, by the Prophet Mahomet, by the seven variations of the Koran, by the hundred and twenty-four thousand prophets of God, by the soul of my grandfather and by the soul of my father; by my sons, and by my sword, bring me money or I will plant your head upon the top of the highest minaret in Stamboul." And by one means or another he arrived at his end, and the money thus extorted he

sometimes kept and accumulated, guarding it jealously like a common miser, and sometimes squandered it by handfuls in the most puerile caprices. To-day it was a fancy for lions, to-morrow tigers, and messengers were sent to procure them in India and Africa; then for a month five hundred parrots made the imperial gardens ring with the same word; then came a rage for carriages, and pianofortes, which he would have played upon while they were upheld on the backs of four slaves; then a mania for cock-fights, at which he assisted with enthusiasm, and with his own hands hung a medal round the neck of the conqueror, sending the vanquished into exile beyond the Bosphorus; then the passion for play, for kiosks, for pictures; the court seemed to have gone back to the times of the first Ibrahim; but the poor prince found no peace, and only passed from one anxiety and trouble to another; he was sad and gloomy; he seemed to foresee the miserable end that awaited him. Sometimes he got it into his head that he should die of poison and for a time, suspicious of everybody, would eat nothing but boiled eggs; sometimes, seized with a terror of conflagrations, he would have every wooden thing taken out of his rooms, even to the frames of the mirrors. It was said that, in his dread of fire, he read every night by the light of a candle floating in a basin of water. And despite these follies, the reasons for which it is not necessary to state, he preserved the force of his imperious will, and knew how to make himself obeyed, and to make the boldest quail before him. The only person who had any influence over him was his mother, a woman of a vain and haughty disposition, who in the first years of his reign used to have the streets leading to the mosque where her son went to

pray, carpeted with brocade, and the next day gave all these carpets to the slaves whose duty it was to remove them. Amid the disorders of his miserable life, between his greater caprices, Abdul Aziz had also smaller fancies, such as that of wishing to have a certain door painted in fresco with certain fruits and flowers, arranged in a given manner, and having prescribed everything to the painter in the minutest manner, he would stand and watch every stroke of the brush, as if he had no other care in the world. The whole city gossiped about these oddities, greatly exaggerated no doubt by the thousand tongues of the Seraglio, and perhaps the first threads of the web of conspiracy that pulled him from his throne were then laid down. His fall, as the Mussulmans say, was written, and with it the sentence that was pronounced upon him and upon his reign. The which is not very different from that which might be given upon almost all the Sultans of the later times. Imperial princes, urged towards European civilization by an education, superficial, but various and liberal, and in the fervor of their youth desirous of novelty and glory, they dreamed, before ascending the throne, grand designs of reform and change, and made firm and sincere resolutions of dedicating their lives to that end, lives which were to be austere with labor and with struggle. But after a few years of useless effort, surrounded by a thousand obstacles, born of habit and tradition, opposed by men and things, terrified at the unforeseen difficulties of the undertaking, they gave up in despair, to seek in pleasure what glory could not give, and to lose little by little in a life entirely sensual, even the remembrance of their first ambition, and the consciousness of their degradation. Thus it happens that at

the accession of each new Sultan, hopes are born, not without reason, which afterwards die in complete disillusion.

Abdul Aziz did not make us wait. At the hour named, a trumpet call was heard, the band burst into a warlike march, the soldiers presented arms, a company of lancers issued from the palace gate, and the Sultan appeared, advancing slowly on horseback, followed by his cortêge. He passed very near me and I had plenty of time to examine him attentively. My fancy was strangely deluded. The king of kings, the prodigal, violent, capricious, imperious Sultan, who was then about forty-four years of age, had the air of a good-natured Turk, who seemed to be masquerading as Sultan without being aware of it. He was a stout, thick-set man, with a handsome face, two large eyes of calm expression, and a short thick beard, slightly grizzled; he had an open and mild countenance, and his bearing was easy and modest; his look tranquil and slow, in which there appeared not the slightest consciousness of the thousand eyes that were then fixed upon him. He rode a grey horse with gold housings, a beautiful creature, led by two splendidly apparelled grooms. His escort followed him at a distance, and from this alone it was easy to know him for the Sultan. His dress was very plain. He wore a simple fez, a long, dark frock-coat buttoned to the chin, light-colored trousers, and morocco boots. He advanced slowly, looking about him with an expression of benevolence and weariness, as if he were saying to himself:—"Ah! if they only knew how bored I am!" The Mussulmans bowed themselves profoundly; many Europeans raised their hats; but he saluted none of them. Passing near us, he gave a glance at a tall officer who saluted with his sabre, an-

other at the Bosphorus, and then a longer one at two young English ladies who were gazing at him from a carriage, and who turned as red as strawberries under his eyes. I observed that his hand was white and well-shaped, the same right hand that two years afterwards opened his veins in his bath. Behind him came a throng of Pashàs, courtiers, and high personages on horseback; almost all large men, with big black beards, dressed simply, silent, grave, composed, as if following a funeral cortége; then came a number of grooms leading some magnificent horses; then a crowd of officials on foot with their breasts covered with gold cord; these passed by, the soldiers grounded their arms, the people broke into groups and scattered about the square, and I remained, with my eyes fixed upon the summit of Mount Bulgurlei, thinking upon the singular conditions in which a Sultan of Stamboul now exists.

He is a Mahometan monarch, I thought, and he reigns over a Christian city, Pera, that towers above his head. He is the absolute sovereign of one of the vastest empires of the world, and there in his metropolis, at but a little distance from him, within great palaces that look down upon his Seraglio, four or five ceremonious foreigners play the master in his house, and when they treat with him, hide under respectful language a perpetual menace at which he trembles. He has in his hands measureless power, the lives and fortunes of millions of subjects, the means of satisfying his wildest desires, and he cannot change the form of his head covering. He is surrounded by an army of courtiers and guards, who would kiss the print of his footstep, and he trembles for his own life and that of his children. He possesses a thousand of the most beautiful women in the

world, and he alone, among all the Mussulmans of his Empire, cannot call a free woman wife, his children must be born of slaves, and he himself is called—"Son of a slave"—by the same people who call him the "shadow of God." His name resounds with reverence and terror from the uttermost confines of Tartary to the uttermost confines of Maghreb, and in his own metropolis there is an innumerable and still increasing people, over whom he has not a shadow of power, and who laugh at him, his force, and his faith. Over the face of his immense empire, among the most miserable tribes of the more distant provinces, in mosques and solitary convents in savage lands, ardent prayers go up for his life and for his glory; and he cannot take a step in his own states without finding himself in the midst of enemies, who execrate him and invoke the vengeance of heaven upon his head. For all that part of the world which lies in front of his realm, he is one of the most august and most formidable monarchs of the universe; for that part that lies at his back, he is the weakest, the most pusillanimous, the most wretched man that wears a crown. An enormous current of ideas, of wills, of forces contrary to the nature and to the traditions of his power, flows around him, overturns, transforms, works in spite of him and without his knowledge, at the destruction of laws, customs, manners, usages, beliefs, men, everything. And he is there, between Europe and Asia, in his great palace washed by the sea, as in a ship ready to spread her sails, in the midst of an infinite confusion of ideas and things, surrounded by fabulous splendor and an immensity of misery, already *ne due ne uno*, no more a true Mussulman, not yet a true European, reigning over a people in a state of mutation, barbarous in

blood, civilized in aspect, two-fronted like Janus, served like a god, watched like a slave, adored, envied, deceived, and meantime, every day that passes extinguishes a ray of his aureole and detaches a stone from his pedestal. To me it seemed that were I he, tired of such a condition, sated with pleasure, sick of adulation, worn out with constant suspicion, indignant at that insecure and idle sovereignty over that nameless disorder, some time, at the hour in which the enormous Seraglio is plunged in sleep, I would plunge into the Bosphorus like a fugitive galley-slave, and would go and pass the night at a tavern in Galata in the midst of a crew of mariners, with a glass of beer and a clay pipe, singing the Marseillaise.

After half an hour the Sultan passed again on his return, this time rapidly, in a closed carriage, followed by a number of officers on foot, and the spectacle was over. That which made the deepest impression upon my memory, was the sight of those officers in full uniform, racing along like a crowd of lackeys, behind the imperial carriage. I never saw before such a prostitution of military dignity.

This spectacle of the passage of the Sultan has become a very poor affair. The Sultan of an olden time issued forth in great pomp, preceded and followed by a cloud of horsemen, slaves, guards, eunuchs, and chamberlains, that seen from a distance, say enthusiastic chroniclers, looked like "a vast bed of tulips." The Sultan of to-day on the contrary seems to take refuge from pomp as from an ostentatious show of lost grandeur. What would one of those earlier monarchs say if rising for a moment from his sepulchre at Broussa or Stamboul, he should behold one of his descendants of the nineteenth century

passing by, wrapped in a long black frock coat, without turban, without scimetar, without a jewel, in the midst of a crowd of insolent foreigners? I believe that he would blush with rage and shame, and that in token of his supreme displeasure, he would, as Soliman the First did to Hassan, cut off the beard of his unworthy representative with one sweep of his sabre, which is the deadliest insult that can be offered to an Osmanli. It is true that between the Sultans of those days and these, there is the same difference as between the Ottoman empire of to-day and that of the first centuries. Those earlier Sultans did really gather into themselves all the youth, the beauty, and the vigor of their race; and they were not only a living image of their own people, a beautiful and visible sign, a precious pearl upon the sword of Islam, but they constituted in themselves alone a real force, insomuch, that it is impossible not to recognize in their personal qualities one of the most efficient reasons for the marvellous increase of the Ottoman power. The finest period is that in the first youth of the dynasty that embraces one hundred and ninety-three years from Osman to Mahomet the Second.

That was indeed a chain of the most powerful princes, and with one single exception, and due account taken of the times and the condition of the race, they were austere, wise and beloved by their subjects, often ferocious, but rarely unjust, and sometimes even generous and beneficent towards their enemies; and it is easy to understand that such princes of such a people must have been handsome and striking in appearance, true lions, as their mothers called them, "whose roar made the earth to tremble." The Abdul Medjids, the Abdul Aziz, the Murads, the Hamids, are mere pale shadows of the Padishah in com-

parison with those formidable young men, sons of mothers of fifteen and fathers of eighteen years of age, born in the flower of Tartar blood, and of Greek, Persian, and Caucasian beauty. At fourteen years old they were commanding armies and governing provinces, and receiving as prizes from the hands of their mothers, slaves, handsome and ardent as themselves. At sixteen they were fathers and at seventy as well. But love in them did not undermine and weaken soul and body. Their souls were of iron, as the poets sang, and their bodies of steel. They all had certain marked features that have been lost in their degenerate descendants, the high forehead, the eyebrows arched and meeting like those of the Persians, the bluish eyes of the sons of the Steppes, the nose curving above the full red lips "like the beak of a parrot over a cherry," and the full black curling beard, for which the Seraglio poets were ever trying to find beautiful and terrible similes. They had "the glance of the eagle of Mount Taurus and the strength of the king of the desert;" necks like a bull, broad shoulders, and capacious chests, "that could contain all the warlike fury of their people," long arms, large joints, legs short and bowed, that could make the vigorous Turcoman horses neigh with pain, and large hairy hands that could wield with ease the maces and enormous bows of their soldiers of bronze. And their surnames were worthy of them: the athlete, the champion, the thunderbolt, the bone-crusher, the shedder of blood. After Allah, war was their first thought, and death their last. They had not the genius of great captains, but they were all endowed with that resolution and promptness of action that often takes the place of genius, and with that ferocious obstinacy that sometimes brings about the same re-

sults. They flew, like winged furies, over the field of battle, displaying from afar the heron plumage of their white turbans and their ample caftans of gold and purple, and their savage yells drove before them the flying hordes that fell like sheep under the Servian and German swords. They dashed on horseback into the rivers, and swam their horses, waving above their heads their scimetars streaming with blood; they seized by the throat, and tore from the saddle as they passed, a slothful or cowardly pashà; they sprang from their horses in the rout, and planted their jewelled poniards in the backs of the flying soldiers; and, wounded to death, holding the wound together, they mounted upon a rising ground to show their janissaries their pale but still imperious and menacing countenance, before they fell, groaning with rage, but not with pain. They were gentle in the harem, ferocious in the camp, humble in the mosque, superb upon the throne. From thence they spoke a language full of hyperbole and menace, and every sentence was an irrevocable sentence, that declared a war, or raised one man to the height of fortune, or sent the head of another rolling down the steps of the throne, or unchained a tempest of fire and steel over a rebellious province. Thus raging like a whirlwind from Persia to the Danube and from Arabia to Macedonia, amid battles, triumphs, the chase, love, they passed from the flower of their youth to a manhood still more turbulent and audacious, and then to an old age full of strength and fiery vigor. And not only in age, but in their earlier years, it sometimes happened that, oppressed by the weight of their monstrous power, suddenly enlightened, in the very fury of victory and triumph, by the consciousness of a more than human responsibility, and

seized by a species of terror in the solitudes of their own greatness, they turned their souls to God, and passed days and nights in the dim recesses of their own gardens, composing religious poems, or they went to the sea shore and meditated upon the Koran, or joined the frantic dances of the dervishes, or mortified the flesh with fasts and hair-cloth shirts in the cavern of some aged hermit. And as in life so in death they almost all presented to the people a venerable or awful figure, whether they died with the serenity of saints like the head of the dynasty, or weighed down with glory and with sadness like Orkau, or by the dagger of a traitor like Murad the First, or in the desperation of exile like Bajazet, or placidly conversing amid a circle of wise men and poets, like the first Mahomet, or in the pain of defeat like the second Murad; and it may be said that their threatening phantoms are all that remain of greatest and most poetic upon the blood-colored horizon of Ottoman history

THE TURKISH WOMEN.

It is a great surprise for those arriving for the first time at Constantinople, after having heard much of the state of slavery in which the women are kept, to see women from all parts, and at all hours of the day, going about as in any European city. It seems as if all those imprisoned birds had been let loose on that particular day, and that a new era of liberty for the Mussulman fair sex was beginning. The first impression is most curious. The stranger wonders whether all those white veiled figures in bright colored wrappers are masqueraders, or nuns, or mad women; and as not one is ever seen accompanied by a man, they seem to belong to no one, and to be all girls and widows, or members of some great association of the "ill-married." At first it is difficult to persuade oneself that all those Turks, male and female, that meet and pass without taking the slightest notice of one another, can have associations in common. One is constrained to stop and meditate upon these strange figures and stranger customs. These then, you think, these are really those "conquerors of the heart," those "founts of pleasure," those "little rose leaves," those "early ripening grapes," those "dews of the morning," "auroras," "vivifiers," and "full moons," of which a thousand poets have sung. These are the *hanums* and the mysterious odalisques that we dreamed of when we were twenty years old, and read Victor Hugo's ballads in the shady garden. These are the lovely op-

pressed ones, imprisoned behind gratings, watched by eunuchs, separated from the world, passing by upon the earth like phantoms, with a cry of pleasure, or a shriek of pain? Let us see what there is yet of truth in all this poetry.

First of all, then, the Turkish woman's face is no longer a mystery, and thus a great part of the poetry that surrounded her has vanished. That jealous veil that, according to the Koran, was to be "a sign of her virtue and a guard against the talk of the world," is now only a semblance. Every body knows how the *yashmak* is fashioned. There are two large white veils, one of which, bound tightly round the head like a bandage, covers the forehead down to the eyebrows, and is tied behind upon the nape of the neck, falling in two long ends down the back as far as the girdle; the other covers the whole of the lower part of the face up to the eyes, and is knotted in with the first so that the two seem but one. But these veils, that should be of muslin, and drawn in such a manner as to leave only the eyes exposed, are in reality of transparent tulle, and so loosely put on, that not only the face, but the ears, neck and hair, are seen, and very often also a European hat, trimmed with flowers and feathers, worn by the "reformed" ladies. And thus it happens that just the contrary of what once obtained is now the custom, for the older women, who were allowed to uncover their faces a little, are now the most closely veiled, while the younger, and more especially the handsome ones, who were always rigorously hidden, are now quite visible. Thus an infinity of charming surprises and lovely mysteries, dear to the poet and romancists, are no longer possible; and among other fables, is that one that the husband beholds the face of his bride

for the first time on his marriage night. But beyond the face, every thing else, shoulders, arms and waist, are scrupulously hidden by the *feredjé*, a kind of long tunic, furnished with a cape and long, wide sleeves, a shapeless garment, falling like a sack from shoulder to feet, made of cloth in winter and silk in summer, and of one generally very brilliant color. Sometimes it is bright red, sometimes orange, sometimes green; and one or the other color predominates from year to year, while the form remains unchanged. But such is the art with which they know how to adjust the *yashmak*, that the handsome appears still handsomer, and the plain very agreeable. It is impossible to say what they contrive to do with those two veils, with what grace they arrange them in coronets or turbans, with what an amplitude and nobility of folds they twist them about, with what lightness and elegance they let them float and fall, making them serve at once to display, to conceal, to promise, to propose a problem, or to betray some little marvel unexpectedly. Some seem to be wearing around their heads a white, transparent cloud, that would vanish with a puff; others look as if they were crowned with lilies and jasmine flowers; all have very white skins, and the veil adds a new charm of whiteness and softness and freshness. It is a costume at once austere and sweet, that has something virginal and holy about it; under which none but gentle thoughts and innocent fancies should have birth. But there is born a little for everything.

It is difficult to define the beauty of the Turkish woman. I may say that when I think of her, I see a very fine face, two black eyes, a crimson mouth, and an expression of sweetness. Almost all of them, however, are painted. They whiten their

faces with almond and jasmine paste, they lengthen and darken their eyebrows with Indian ink, they tint their eyelids, they powder their throats, they put a dark circle round their eyes, they wear patches on their cheeks. But they do it all with taste, not like the beauties of Fez, who paint themselves with a white-wash brush. The greater part of them have fine oval faces, the nose a little arched, full lips and round chins, with dimples; many have dimples also in their cheeks; a beautiful throat, long and flexible; and small hands, almost always hidden, unfortunately, by the long sleeves of their mantles. Almost all are rather fat, and many are above the middle height; it is rare to see a dumpy or a long, thin woman, as in our country. All have a common defect of walking with a stoop, and a certain waddle like that of a big baby suddenly grown up; which comes, it is said, from a weakness of limb caused by abuse of the bath, and also somewhat from their awkward, ill-fitting slippers. In fact it is common to see very elegant ladies, who must have small, delicate feet, shod with men's slippers, or long wide boots, wrinkled all over, that a European ragpicker would disdain. But even in this ugly manner of walking there is a kind of girlish air, that when one is used to it, is not displeasing. Of those figures like fashion plates so frequent in European cities, that walk like puppets, and look as if they were hopping on the squares of a chess board, there are none to be seen. They have not yet lost the stately, negligent grace of the Oriental, and if they were to lose it, they might be more dignified, but certainly would be less interesting. There are beautiful figures among them, of a great variety of beauty, according as there is a mingling of Turkish, Arabic, Circassian, or Persian blood. There

are matrons of thirty, of opulent forms which the *feredjé* fails to conceal, very tall, with great dark eyes, full lips and dilated nostrils—*hanums* to strike terror with a look into the souls of a hundred slaves.

There are others small and plump, who have everything round—face, eyes, nose, and mouth—and an air of such gentleness, benevolence, and childishness, an appearance of such entire and mild resignation to their destiny, and of being nothing but toys and things for recreation, that passing near them one is tempted to pop a sugar plum into their mouths. And there are the slender forms of wives of sixteen, ardent and vivacious, with eyes full of caprice and cunning, who inspire in the beholder a sentiment of pity for the poor *effendi* who has to control them, and the unfortunate eunuch who is obliged to watch them. The city makes an admirable frame for their beauty and their costume. These white-veiled, purple-robed figures should be seen seated in a caique in the midst of the blue waters of the Bosphorus; or reclining on the grass under the green shade of the cemeteries; or better still, coming down a steep and solitary street of Stamboul, shut in at the back by a great plane tree, the wind blowing, and the veil and *feredjé* streaming out, and displaying throat, and foot and ankle; and I assure you that in that moment, if the indulgent decree of Soliman the Magnificent were still in vigor, that mulcted in an *aspro* every kiss given to the wife or daughter of another man, Harpagon himself would kick avarice aside. And when the wind blows the Mussulman woman does not put herself out to hold down her *feredjé*, because her modesty does not extend below her knee, and sometimes stops a good bit above it.

One thing that is astonishing, at first, is their way of looking and laughing, which would excuse the boldest advance. It frequently happens that a European looking fixedly at a Turkish lady, even one of high rank, is rewarded by a smiling glance, or an open laugh. It is not rare, either, for a handsome *hanum* in a carriage to give a gracious salute with her hand, behind the eunuch's back, to a Frankish gentleman who has pleased her fancy. Sometimes in a cemetery, or in a retired street, a capricious lady will go so far as to throw a flower as she passes, or to let it fall with the manifest intention that it shall be picked up by the elegant *giaour* who is behind her. In this way a fatuous traveller may be very much deluded, and there are indeed some simple beings, who after having passed a month in Constantinople, really imagine in perfect good faith that they have destroyed the peace of a hundred unfortunate women. No doubt there is, in these acts, an ingenuous expression of sympathy, but there is still more of a spirit of rebellion, which all the Turkish women have in their hearts, born of the subjection in which they are held, and which they show, when they can, in these foolish tricks, thus spiting their masters, even in secret. They do it more from childishness than from coquetry, and their coquetry is of a singular kind, resembling much the first experiments of little girls, when they become aware that they are being looked at. It is a broad laugh, or a look upwards, with mouth open and an expression of astonishment, or a pretending to have a pain in the head or the leg, or a wilful jerking of the embarrassing folds of the *feredjè*, school-girl tricks that seem intended to excite laughter rather than to seduce. Never an affected or artificial attitude. The little art they show

is entirely rudimental. One can see, as Tommaseo says, that they have not many veils to lift; that they are not accustomed to a long wooing, and that when they feel an attraction towards any one, instead of sighing and rolling their eyes in suspense, they will go straight to their point, and if they could express their sentiments, would say:—Christian, thou pleasest me! Not being able to do that, they make it frankly visible, showing two rows of shining pearl-like teeth, or laughing out in his face. They are pretty tamed Tartars.

And they are free; it is a truth apparent to the stranger almost as soon as he arrives. It is an exaggeration to say, like Lady Montague, that they are more free than Europeans; but whoever has been at Constantinople can not but laugh when he hears them spoken of as "slaves." Ladies, when they wish to go out, order the eunuchs to prepare the carriage, ask no one's permission, and come back when they please, provided it is before nightfall. Formerly, they could not go without being accompanied by a eunuch, or by a female slave, or friend, and the boldest were at least obliged to take one of their children with them, who served as a sign of respectability. If any woman appeared alone in a retired street or square, some city guard or rigorous old Turk was sure to accost her and demand: "Whither goest thou? Whence comest thou? Why art thou alone? Is this the way thou respectest thy effendi? Return at once to thy abode!" But now they go out alone by hundreds, and are seen at all hours in the Mussulman suburbs, and in the Frank quarters. They go to pay visits to their friends, they pass half the day in the bath houses, they go about in boats; on Thursdays to the Sweet Waters of Europe,

on Sundays to those of Asia, on Tuesdays to the cemetery of Scutari, on other days to the islands, to Terapia, to Bujukdéré, to Kalender, to lunch with their slave women, in companies of eight or ten. They go to pray at the tombs of the Sultans, to see the dervishes at their convents, to visit the public exhibitions of nuptial *trousseaux*, and there is not the sign of a man accompanying or following them, nor would any presume to accost them, even when quite alone. To see a Turk in the streets of Constantinople—not with a lady on his arm or at his side, but stopping for one instant to speak with a "veiled woman," even if they bore husband and wife written on their foreheads, would appear to all the strangest of strange things, or rather an unheard-of piece of impudence, such as it would be in our streets were a man and woman to make love to each other *pro bono publico*. In this way, the Turkish women are really more free than their European sisters, and their delight in their liberty is indescribable, and the wild excitement with which they rush into noise, crowds, light, open air, they who in their own homes never see but one man, and live behind grated windows and in cloistered gardens. They go about the city with the joy of a liberated prisoner. It is amusing to watch one of them from a distance, and following her footsteps afar off, observe how she prolongs and spreads out the pleasure of vagabondizing. She enters a mosque near by to say a prayer, and stays a quarter of an hour under the portico chattering with a friend; then to the bazaar to look in at a dozen shops and turn two or three upside down in search of some trifle; then she takes the tramway, gets out at the fish market, crosses the bridge, stops to contemplate all the braids and wigs in the hair dresser's win-

dows, in the street of Pera, enters a cemetery and eats a sweetmeat, sitting on a tomb, returns to the city, goes down to the Golden Horn, turning a hundred corners, and glancing at every thing out of the corner of her eye,—shop windows, prints, placards, advertisements, people passing, carriages, signs, theatre doors,—buys a bunch of flowers, drinks a lemonade, gives alms to a poor man, crosses the Golden Horn in a caique, and walks about Stamboul; there she takes the tramway again, and arriving at her own door, is capable of turning back, to make the tour of a group of small houses; exactly as children coming out for the first time alone, seek to make the most of their liberty, and see a little of everything. Any poor corpulent *effendi* who should try to follow his wife to spy out her actions, would be left behind before half the journey was accomplished.

To see the Mussulman fair sex, it is well to go one day to the great festival of the Sweet Waters of Europe, at the end of the Golden Horn, or to those of Asia, near the village of Anaduli-Hissar; which are two great public gardens, covered with groves of trees, watered by two small rivers, and sprinkled with cafés and fountains. There over a vast grassy plain, in the shade of nut trees, pines, plane trees and sycamores, forming a succession of green pavilions where no ray of sun penetrates, are to be seen thousands of Turkish women seated in groups and circles, surrounded by their female slaves, eunuchs and children, lunching and frolicking for half the day, in the midst of crowds of people coming and going. They have hardly arrived when they seem to fall into a sort of dream. It seems like a festival in the paradise of Islam. Those myriads of white veiled figures, clothed in *feredjès* of scarlet, yellow, green,

and grey, those innumerable groups of slaves in many-colored garments, that throng of children in fanciful dresses, the large Smyrna carpets spread on the ground, the gold and silver vessels, or what looked like such, passing from hand to hand, the Mussulman coffee-seller in gala-dress, running about carrying fruits and ices, *zingari* dancing, Bulgarian shepherds piping, horses trapped with silk and gold fastened to trees, pashas, beys, and young gentlemen galloping by the river side, the movement of the distant crowd like a field of flowers, many-colored caiques, and splendid carriages arriving, to mingle other colors with that sea of color, and the murmur of songs, flutes, and other instruments, the voices of children, in the midst of that loveliness of green shadow, varied here and there with glimpses of the sun-lit landscape beyond ; all present a spectacle so gay and so new, that one is tempted to clap one's hands and cry out—*Bravissimo !* as in a theatre.

Even here, in spite of the confusion, it is extremely rare to catch a Turkish couple in the act of exchanging amorous glances, or smiles and gestures of mutual intelligence. Gallantry *coram populo* does not exist there as in Italy ; there is to be found neither the melancholy sentinel who passes up and down under the window of his lady, nor the panting rear-guard following for three hours on the stretch in the footsteps of his goddess. If it should happen that in some deserted street, a young Turk is surprised looking up at a grated window, from which sparkles a black eye, or a white hand waves for an instant, you may be quite certain that the couple are betrothed. To the betrothed alone is permitted the sweet childishness of official love-making, such as speaking from a distance by means

of a flower, or a ribbon, or the color of a dress, or a scarf. And in these matters the Turkish lady is mistress. They have a thousand objects, among flowers, fruits, leaves, feathers, stones, each one of which possesses a specific meaning, being an epithet or a verb or even a complete sentence, so that they can make a letter out of a bunch of flowers, or say a hundred things with a box or purse full of various small objects that seem to have been gathered together casually; a clove, a strip of paper, a section of a pear, a bit of soap, a match, a little gold thread and a small portion of cinnamon and pepper, express the following:—"I have loved you long—I burn, I languish, I die for love of you. Give me a little hope—do not repulse me—send me one word of reply." They can say many other things besides; reproof, advice, warning, information, all can be conveyed in this way; and youthful swains, in their first attack of palpitation, find much occupation in learning the symbolical phrases and composing long letters addressed to lovely sultanas seen only in their dreams. There is also the language of gesture, some of which is most graceful; that, for instance, of the man for example who feigns to tear his breast, signifying: "I am torn by the furies of love;" to which the lady replies by letting both her arms fall at her sides; which means; "I open my arms to thee." But there is not perhaps one European who has ever seen these things; which, for the rest are now more traditional than customary. The Turkish ladies would blush to speak of them, and only here and there some ingenuous *hanum* might confide them to some Christian friend of her own sex.

In this way also only can we know how the Turkish woman

is dressed within the walls of the harem, wearing that beautiful, capricious, and pompous costume, of which we all have some idea, and which gives to its wearer a princely dignity, as well as a child-like grace. We shall never see it, unless the fashion is adopted in our own country, for even if some day the *feredjè* should be thrown aside, the lovely Turks would be found to wear the European dress underneath. What a disappointment for the painters, and what a pity! Imagine a beautiful woman, "slender as a cypress," and blushing, "with all the colors of the rose," wearing, a little on one side of her head, a small round cap of crimson velvet embroidered with silver; her black tresses falling over her shoulders; her vest of white damask worked with gold, with wide, open sleeves, and parting in front to display her full drawers of rose-colored silk, falling in many folds over her small feet clothed in slippers with turned up Chinese points; a sash of green satin round her waist; diamonds on her neck, in her hair, at her girdle, on her arms, in her ears, on the border of her cap, on her slippers, buttoning the neck of her chemise, and across her forehead; glittering from head to foot like a Spanish Madonna, and lying in a childish attitude, upon a broad divan, surrounded by her Circassian, Arab, and Persian slave women, wrapped like antique statues in their flowing robes; or imagine a bride, "white as the crest of Olympus," dressed in pale blue satin, and all covered with a veil of woven gold, seated upon a pearl embossed ottoman, in front of which, upon a carpet from Teheran, kneels the bridegroom, making his final prayer before uncovering his treasure. This home dress, however, is subject to the caprice of fashion. The women, having nothing else to do, pass their time in devising

new adornments; cover themselves with trinkets and fringes, put feathers and ribbons in their hair, tie bands around their foreheads, and strips of fur about their necks and arms; borrowing something from every kind of Oriental costume. And they mingle European fashions with their own as well; they wear false hair, and dye their own black, blonde, red, making themselves as artificial and ridiculous as the most ambitious of their European sisters; and doubtless if by the waving of a magic wand at the Sweet Waters, all the *feredjès* could be made to fall, we should see as great and strange varieties of costume among the women as are to be seen among the men upon the bridge of the Sultana Validé.

The apartments in which these rich and lovely ladies dwell correspond in some sort with their seductive and bizarre attire. The rooms reserved for the women are generally well situated, commanding marvellous views of country, sea, and city. Below, there is a garden shut in by high walls clothed with ivy and jessamine; above, a terrace; on the street side, small projecting rooms enclosed with glass like the *miradores* of the Spanish houses. The rooms are almost always small; the floors covered with Chinese mats and carpets, the ceilings painted with flowers and fruit, large divans running along the walls, a marble fountain in the middle, vases with flowers in the windows, and that vague, soft light, peculiar to Oriental houses, dim and shaded, like a wood, or like a cloister, or sacred spot, where you are impelled to walk and speak softly, and to use gentle, sweet words, discoursing only of God and love. The decorations of these harems are generally simple and severe, but there are some of great magnificence, with their walls covered with white

satin embroidered in gold, ceilings of cedar wood, gilded gratings, and very rich furniture. The manner of life may be divined from the furniture. It consists of easy chairs, large and small ottomans, little carpets, stools and foot-benches, cushions of every description, and mattresses covered with shawls, and brocades; the whole of the softest and most luxurious description. Here and there may be seen hand mirrors and large fans of ostrich feathers; carved *chibouks* are suspended on the walls; there are cages full of birds in the windows, perfume-burners and musical clocks on the tables, toys and small objects of every kind testifying to the puerile caprices of an idle woman. Nor is this luxury confined to the things that are seen. There are houses in which the table service is of gold and silver, the napkins are of satin fringed with gold, brilliants and other stones glitter on the forks and spoons, the coffee cups, pipes, wine coolers, and fans; and there are other houses, in much greater number, of course, in which almost nothing has been changed from the time of the Tartar tent, where everything could be packed upon one mule's back, and be ready for a new pilgrimage across Asia; houses of primitive austerity and pure Mahometanism, in which, when the hour for departure shall arrive, no sound shall be heard but the wild voice of the master, saying: *Olsun!*—So let it be!

The Turkish house is divided, as we know, into two parts: the *harem* and the *selamlik*. The *selamlik* is the part reserved for the man. Here he works, receives his friends, takes his noon-day nap, and generally lives. The wife never enters it. As in the *selamlik* the man is master, so the woman is mistress in the *harem*. She has full powers of administration there

and can do anything she pleases except receive men. When she does not choose to receive her husband, she can decline his visit, and politely request him to come another time. One single door and a small corridor divide the *harem* from the *selamlik;* but they are as distinct as two separate houses. The servants of each part belong only to that, and there are two kitchens. Rarely the husband dines with his wife, especially when there is more than one. The wife, however, must be always prepared for her master's visit, dressed and looking her best, ready to vanquish a rival, and to preserve as best she may a predominance that is always in danger; she must be something of a courtezan, exercising such self-control as shall secure a smiling aspect of things about her lord, and even when her heart is sorrowful, display the radiant visage of a happy and fortunate woman, so that he may not be disgusted and repelled. Thus the husband is rarely acquainted with his wife, whom he never has known either as a girl, sister, or friend; whom he does not know as a mother. And she allows the nobler part of her nature to perish slowly within her, there being no call for its exercise, no opportunity for its revelation; resolutely stifling the voices of her heart and conscience, to find in a sort of sleepy animalism, if not felicity, at least peace. She has, it is true, the comfort of children, and her husband plays with them, and caresses them in her presence; but it is a comfort embittered by the thought that perhaps an hour ago he has caressed the children of another; that an hour thence he may be caressing those of a third, and perhaps within the year a fourth. The love of the lover, the affection of the father, friendship, confidence, all are divided and subdivided, and each has its hour,

its measure, and its appropriate ceremony; so every thing is cold and insufficient.

The conditions of conjugal life vary however greatly, according to the pecuniary means of the husband, even without counting the fact that one who is not rich enough to maintain more than one woman, is obliged to have one wife only. The rich noble lives separated in body and mind from his wife, because he is able to keep an apartment or even a house for her sole use, and because wishing to receive friends, clients, flatterers, without his wives being seen or disturbed, he is obliged to have a separate residence. The middle class Turk, for reasons of economy, lives nearer to his wife, sees her more frequently, and is on more familiar terms with her. Lastly, the poor Turk is necessarily obliged to eat, sleep, and pass most of his time in the close company of his wife and children. Riches divides, poverty unites. In the case of the poor man, there is not much difference between the Turkish and the Christian household. The woman who can not have a slave, does her own work, and labor enhances her importance and authority. It is not rare to see her drag her lazy husband from the cafe or the tavern, and drive him home with blows from her slipper. They treat each other as equals, passing the evening together at the door of their house; in the more distant quarters, they often go together to buy the family supplies; and husband and wife are often seen eating their luncheon together in a cemetery near the tomb of some dead relation, with their children about them, like a family of working people in our own country.

There are those who say that the women of the East are satisfied with polygamy, and do not understand the injustice of

it. To believe this one must be ignorant not only of the East, but of the human soul itself. If it were true, that would not happen which does happen; namely, that there is scarcely any Turkish girl who, accepting the hand of a man, does not make it a condition that he shall not marry again during her life time; there would not be so many wives returning to their families, because the husbands have failed in this promise; and the Turkish proverb would not be in existence, which says:—a house with four women is like a ship in a tempest. Even if she is adored by her husband, the Eastern woman can but curse polygamy, which obliges her to live with the sword of Damocles above her head, having from day to day a rival, not hidden and remote and always guilty, like the rival of the European wife; but installed beside her, in her own house, bearing her title, claiming her rights; condemned perhaps to see her own slave promoted to an equality with herself, and giving birth to sons having the same rights as her own. It is impossible that she should not feel the injustice of such a law. She knows that when her husband introduces a rival into her home, he is but putting in practice the right given to him by the law of the Prophet. But in the bottom of her soul she feels that there is a more ancient and more sacred law which condemns his act as traitorous, and an abuse of power; that the tie between them is undone; that her life is ruined, that she has the right of rebellion. And even if she does not love her husband, she has a hundred reasons to detest the law; her children's interests are injured, her own self-respect is wounded, and she finds herself in the fatal necessity of complete abandonment, or of living as a mere chattel for her husband's use. It may be said that the

Turkish woman knows that the same things happen to her European sister; true, but she also knows that the latter is under no constraint of civil and religious law to respect and live in amity with her who poisons her life, and that she has at least the consolation of being considered as a victim, having besides many ways of vindicating and alleviating her position, without her husband being able to say, like the Turk:—I have the right to love a hundred women, but it is your duty to love me only.

It is true that the Turkish woman has many legal guarantees, and many privileges conceded to her by custom. She is generally treated with certain forms of knightly courtesy. No man would dare to lift his hand against a woman in the public street (as in England). No soldier, even in times of popular tumult and sedition, would run the risk of maltreating the most insolent woman of the people. The husband treats his wife with ceremonious courtesy. The mother is the object of peculiar deference. No man would think for a moment of living on his wife's earnings. The husband at his marriage assigns a dowry to his bride; she brings nothing to his house but her wardrobe and a few female slaves. In case of repudiation or divorce, the man is obliged to give the woman enough to live upon; and this obligation saves her from maltreatment for which she might seek and obtain a separation. The facility of divorce remedies in part the sad consequences of matrimony blindly contracted under the constitution of Turkish society where the sexes live entirely separated. Very little cause is needed for a woman to obtain her divorce; that the husband has ill-treated her once, that he has spoken ill of her to others, that he has been unfaithful for a certain time. She has only to

present her written statement of grievances to the tribunal; or, she can, when opportunity occurs, go in person before a *vizier*, the grand vizier himself, by whom she is received and listened to kindly and without delay. If she cannot agree with the other wives, the husband is bound to give her a separate apartment; and even if she does agree, she has a right to a separate apartment. The man cannot marry or take for an *odalisque* any one of the slave women whom the wife has brought into the house. A woman seduced and abandoned can oblige her seducer to marry her if he has not already four wives; and if he has four, he must receive her as an *odalisque* and her children must be recognized; which is the reason why among the Turks there are no bastards. Old bachelors are rare, old maids very rare; forced marriages less frequent than might be supposed, since the law punishes the father who is guilty of coercion. The State pensions widows without relations and without means, and provides for the orphans; many female children left without protection are taken by rich ladies who educate and marry them; it is very unusual for a woman to fall into misery. All this is true, and very good; but it does not prevent us from smiling when the Turks pretend that the social condition of their women is better than that of ours, and that their society enjoys an immunity from the corruption of which European manners are accused.

From all this one may easily gather what sort of a being the Turkish woman is likely to be. The greater part of them are only pleasing feminine creatures. Many know how to read and write, and practice neither the one nor the other; and those who have a superficial culture are miraculous beings. The

men, according to whom women should have "long hair and short intelligence," do not care to have them cultivate their minds, and prefer that they should remain inferior to themselves. Thus, having no instruction from books, and receiving none from conversation, they are grossly ignorant. From the separation of the two sexes comes the absence of gentle manners in the one sex, and of dignity in the other; the men are coarse, and the women vacant. Having no society beyond their own small circle of women, they all retain even in old age something puerile and trifling in their ideas and manners; a wild curiosity about every thing, a habit of being astonished on the smallest occasion, an immense fussiness over nonsense of any sort, small backbitings, sudden spites and tempers, screams of laughter at the slightest cause, and a fondness for the most childish games, such as chasing each other from room to room and snatching bonbons from each other's mouth. It is true that they have, to turn the French saying the other way, the good qualities of their defects; and that their nature is transparent and plain, to be seen through at the first glance; *real persons*, as Madame de Sévigné says, not masks, nor caricatures, nor monkeys! open and all of a piece even in their sadness; and if it be true that it is only necessary for one of them to swear to a thing in order that no one shall believe her, it only shows that they are not artful enough to be deceitful. But it is also true that in that narrow life, deprived of all mental or spiritual recreation, in which the instinctive desire of youth and beauty for praise and admiration remains forever ungratified, their souls become embittered and exasperated; and having no education to control and guide them, when some ugly passion

moves them, they rush into excess. Idleness foments in them a thousand senseless caprices, which they pursue obstinately, and will have gratified at any price. Besides, in the sensual atmosphere of the harem, in the constant company of women inferior to themselves in birth and position, with no man to act as a controlling force, they acquire an extraordinary crudity of speech, they know no delicacies of language, they say things without a veil, liking best the word that might raise a blush, the shameless jest, or plebeian equivoque; and are often most foul-mouthed, indecent and insolent. A European who understands the Turkish language may sometimes hear a *hanum* of distinguished appearance, abusing some indiscreet or careless shopkeeper in language that in his own country could not be heard except among women of the lowest and most abandoned class.

Many have described the Turkish woman as all sweetness, softness and submission. But there are among them some of a fierce and haughty spirit, not to say ferocious. Even there in times of popular tumult, the women are to be seen in the front rank; they arm themselves, crowd together, stop the carriages of the offending viziers, cover them with abuse, throw stones at them, and resist armed force. They are kind and gentle, like most women, when no passion gnaws or excites them. They treat their slaves well enough, if they are not jealous of them; they show tenderness for their children, although they do not know how, or do not care to educate them; they contract with one another, especially those who are separated from their husbands, or afflicted with a common sorrow, the most tender friendships, full of girlish enthusiasm, and show their reciprocal

affection by wearing the same color, or the same fashion of garment, and using the same perfumes. And here I might add, what has been written by more than one European lady traveller, "that there are among them all the vices of Babylon;" but I am unwilling in so grave a question, to affirm anything upon the faith of another.

As is their nature, so are their manners. The greater part of them are like those young girls of good family, but brought up in the country, who, no longer children but not yet women, are constantly committing in company a hundred amiable absurdities, causing their mammas to frown and shake their heads every moment. To hear a European lady relate her experience while paying a visit in a harem, is truly comic. The *hanum* for instance, who at first will be seated on the sofa in the same decorous attitude as her visitor, suddenly throws her arms over her head and emits a loud yawn, or seizes one of her knees between her hands. Accustomed to the liberty or rather license, of the harem, to the attitudes of idleness and ennui, and weakened by much warm bathing, she tires immediately of any upright position. She throws herself down on her divan, turning and twisting about, and getting her long garments into an inextricable entanglement; she leans on her elbows, she takes her feet in her hands, she puts a cushion on her knees and her elbows in the cushion, she stretches out her limbs and draws them up in a heap, she puts up her back like a cat, rolls from the divan upon the carpet, and from the carpet to the marble floor, and sleeps when she is sleepy wherever she finds herself, like a baby. A French traveller has said that she has a good deal of the mollusk in her composition. Their least relaxed position is that of sitting with

crossed legs, and from this habit probably comes the fact that their legs are slightly bowed. But with what grace they sit! They sink to the ground without using their hands to support them, and remain like statues, motionless, (all this may be seen in the gardens and cemeteries) and rise, all of a piece, as if set on springs. The grace of the Turkish woman is in repose, and in the art of displaying the soft lines and curves of the reclining form, with head thrown back, hair flowing, and helpless arms—the art of extracting gold and gems from her husband and of driving her eunuchs wild.

There are two other kinds of harems besides the pacific and the stormy; the harem of the young Turk without prejudices, who encourages his wife in her European tendencies, and that of the conservative, either by his own convictions, or dominated by his relations, in general by some inflexible old Mussulman mother, who governs the house as suits herself. In the first there is a pianoforte, and a Christian lady as teacher; there are work tables, straw chairs, a mahogany bedstead, and a writing desk; on the wall hangs a fine portrait of the effendi, done by an Italian artist of Pera; in a corner a book-shelf with a few books, among them a small French and Turkish dictionary, and the illustrated *Journal des Môdes* which the lady receives from the wife of the Spanish Consul. She also paints fruit and flowers in water colors with much enthusiasm. She assures her friends that she is never lonely or *ennuyée*. Between one employment and another she writes her memoirs. At a certain hour she receives her French teacher, (an old, crooked-backed man, of course) with whom she practices conversation. Sometimes a German photographer from Galata comes to take her

portrait. When she is ill, she is visited by a European physician, who may even be a handsome young man, the husband not being stupidly jealous, like his antiquated friends. And once in a while comes a French dressmaker, who takes her measure for a costume modelled on the very last fashion plate, with which madame intends to surprise her husband on Thursday evening, the sacred evening in Mussulman houses, when the husband is expected to pay his debts of gallantry towards his "rose leaf." And the effendi, who is a man of high aspirations, has promised her that she shall certainly have a glimpse, through some half open door, of the next grand ball that is given by the English Ambassador. In short, the *hanum* is a European lady of the Mohammedan religion, and she tells her friends complacently that she lives like a *cocona*—like a Christian; her friends, as far as they can, following her example. But in the other harem all is rigorously Turkish, from the attire of the ladies down to the minutest household detail. The Koran is the only book, the "Stamboul" the only journal allowed. If the *hanum* be ill, one of the numerous Turkish female doctors is called, having a miraculous specific for every known malady. All the openings in the house are well grated and bolted, and nothing European, except the air, can enter; unless the lady has had the misfortune to learn French in her childhood; in which case her sister-in-law brings her French romances of the worst type, telling her at the same time:—"See, what kind of society this is which you are aping! What fine doings! What admirable examples!"

And yet the life of the Turkish woman is full of accidents, worries, and small gossip and tale-bearing, that at the first

aspect do not seem possible in a society where the two sexes are so divided. In one harem, for instance, there is the old mother who wishes to drive one of the wives out to make room for a favorite of her own, and tries in every way to influence her son against her and her children. In another it is the wife who is jealous of a rival in her husband's affections, and moves heaven and earth to get a handsome slave woman and put her in his way, in order that in this way she may detach him from the other. Another wife, who has a natural leaning towards match making, racks her brains to bring about a marriage between some male relative of her own and some young girl of her household, thus circumventing her husband who has had his eyes turned in the same direction. Here it is a number of ladies subscribing to a fund wherewith to buy a handsome slave woman, and present her to the Sultan, or the Grand Vizier; there, another group of ladies, highly placed, are busy pulling a hundred secret wires, whereby some powerful enemy is to be pulled down, some friend saved, some importunate person sent into a distant province. And although there is less social communion than among us, there is just as much gossip about other people's affairs. The fame of a woman of high spirit, or of a specially evil tongue, or of ferocious jealousy, is spread far beyond the circle of her acquaintance. There also, pointed speeches and fine play upon words, to which the Turkish language readily lends itself, are passed from mouth to mouth and from circle to circle. Births, circumcisions, marriages, all the small events that happen in the European colony and in the Seraglio are subjects of endless discussion. "Have you seen the new bonnet of the French ambassadress? Who

knows about the handsome Georgian slave that the Sultana Validé is going to present to the Sultan on the day of the great Beiram? Is it true that Ahmed-Pashà's wife was seen yesterday in a pair of European boots trimmed with silk tassels? Have the costumes for the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* at the Seraglio Theatre yet arrived from Paris? It is a week since Mahmoud Effendi's wife began to pray for the grace of twins in the mosque of Bajazet. There has been a scandal at the photographer so and so's at Pera, because Ahmed Effendi found his wife's portrait there. Madame Ayesha drinks wine. Madame Fatima has got visiting cards. Madame Hafiten has been seen to go into a Frankish shop at three and come out at four." And so on, *ad infinitum*.

It would be singularly diverting if there existed among the Turks, as among us, those living gazettes of the fashionable world who know everybody and everybody's history; it would be both amusing and instructive to plant oneself on a holiday at the entrance to the European Sweet Waters in company with one of these, and hear his comments upon the notabilities as they pass by. That, he would say, is a lady who has lately broken with her husband and gone to live at Scutari; Scutari is the refuge for all malcontents and quarrelsome people; she is staying with a friend, and will remain, until her husband, who really cares for her, comes and makes it up. This effendi now going by is a clerk of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who has lately married an Arab slave and she is now learning Turkish from his sister. This pretty woman is a divorced wife, who is only waiting until a certain effendi shall have gotten rid of one of his four, to go and take the place that was promised her. That other dame is

a lady who has been twice divorced from the same husband, and now wants to marry him a third time, he agreeing to do so; and so she will be married in a day or two, as the law commands, to another man, from whom she will be divorced the following day, after which the lovely capricious one can celebrate her third nuptials with her first spouse. The brunette with the lively eyes is an Abyssinian slave presented by a great lady of Cairo to a great lady of Stamboul, who died, and left her mistress of the house. That effendi of fifty has had ten wives. That little old woman in green can boast of having been the legitimate wife of twelve husbands. Here comes a lady who is making a fortune by buying girls of fourteen, having them taught music, singing and dancing, and the fine manners of noble houses, and then selling them at a profit of five hundred per cent. Here is another, who was first a slave, then an *odalisque* (or concubine), then wife, then divorced, then married again, and now she is a widow and is looking out for a good marriage. That man is a merchant who for business reasons has married four wives who live, one at Constantinople, one at Trebizond, one at Salonica, and one at Alexandria in Egypt, by which arrangement he has four different homes where he may repose from the fatigues of his journeys. That handsome Pashà of twenty-four was only a month ago a poor subaltern officer of the Imperial Guard, and the Sultan made him a Pashà and married him to one of his sisters; but his Sultana is known to be "as jealous as a nightingale," and perhaps, if we were to search the crowd, we might discover a slave watching to see whom he looks at, and who looks at him. See this child of five years old! She was this morning betrothed to a small boy of

eight; the gentleman was carried by his parents to pay his bride a visit, found her much to his taste, and went into a fury because a cousin of three feet high dared to kiss her in his presence. Ah! what have we lost! A Seraglio carriage has gone by, and the Sultan's third wife was in it; I recognized it by the rose-colored ribbon on the intendant's neck; his third wife presented to him by the Pashà of Smyrna; she has the largest eyes and the smallest mouth in the world; a face something like that little *hanum* there with the arched nose, who yesterday had a flirtation with an English artist of my acquaintance. The little wretch! and to think that when the angels Nekir and Mukir come to judge her soul, she will try to get off with the usual lie; saying that she had her eyes shut and did not recognize the infidel!

But then there are unfaithful Turkish wives? Without doubt there are such; and this notwithstanding the jealousy of their lords, and the vigilance of their eunuchs, notwithstanding the hundred blows with a whip with which the Koran threatens the culprit, notwithstanding the species of mutual assurance society formed by Turks among themselves. It may be even affirmed that the "veiled ones" (*velate*) of Constantinople commit as many sins as the unveiled ones of other countries. If this were not so, *Caraghenz** would not have so often upon his lips the word *kerata:* which being translated into a classic name, means Menelaus. It must be said, however, that women are no longer thrown into the Bosphorus either with or without a sack, and that punishment and the bastinado are no longer practiced even by the most ferocious *kerata.* The force of ridicule, as

(* The Turkish Punch.)

well as other European forces, has found its way into Mussulman society, and even jealousy is afraid of that. And besides, Turkish jealousy being more the effect of self-love than affection, (and certainly it is powerful and vindictive enough,) has not that indefatigable and investigating eye that belongs to the more spiritual passion. The Turkish authorities do their best to prevent certain abuses. It is enough to say that in the orders given to the police of Constantinople on holiday occasions, the larger part refer to the women, and directly levelled at them in the form of advice and threats. It is forbidden, for instance, to them to enter the back-shops, or rooms behind the shops; they must stay where they can be seen from the street. They are not to go in the tramways for amusement; or they are to get out at the terminus and not come back by the same way. They are forbidden to make signs, to stop at this place, to pass by that place, to stay more than a certain time at a certain spot. And then there is that blessed veil, which, originally intended as a safeguard for the woman, is now turned into a mere screen for intrigue and coquetry.

The bath-houses are the places where the Turkish women meet to plot and gossip. The bath is in a certain way their theatre. They go in couples and groups with their slaves, carrying cushions, carpets, articles for the toilet, sweetmeats, and often their dinner, so that they may remain all day. There in those dimly lighted halls, among marbles and fountains, there are often gathered together more than two hundred women, naked as nymphs, or only partially clothed, presenting, according to the testimony of European ladies, a spectacle to make a hundred painters drop their brushes. Here may be seen the

snow-white *hanum* beside the ebony black slave; the matron of opulent charms beloved by the Turk of antique taste; slender little brides with short, curling, childish locks; golden-haired Circassians, and Turkish women with their black tresses braided into an infinity of little tails, like an enormous wig; one with an amulet on her neck, another with a sprig of garlic bound round her head as a charm against the evil eye; half-savages with tattooed arms, and fashionable dames whose bodies bear the traces of the corset, and their ankles the marks of French boots; and some, whose shoulders show the signs of the eunuch's whip. Some are stretched upon their mats, smoking, some are having their hair combed by their slave women, some are embroidering, others singing, chattering, laughing, and slandering their neighbors in the next group. A European lady among them is the object of immense curiosity and a thousand idle questions:—"Is it true that you go to balls with your shoulders bare? and what does your effendi think of that? and what do the other men say? and how do you dance? That way!—really?—well, I would not have believed it if I had not seen it!"

They are delighted to receive a European lady in their houses, and on such occasions they invite their friends, display all their slaves and their treasures, load the visitor with sweets and fruits, and seldom let her go without making her accept a present. The sentiment that moves them to these demonstrations is more curiosity than kindness; and as soon as they are familiar with their new acquaintance, they examine her costume bit by bit from bonnet to boots, and are not satisfied until they have conducted her to the bath, where they may see how a

nazarene is made. They have not, however, any more the contemptuous dislike that they once nourished for their European sisters. On the contrary, they feel humiliated in their presence and seek to imitate in every way their dress and manners. If they study languages, it is in order to introduce a word here and there to show their knowledge, but above all, it is to be able to converse with a Christian, and to be called madame; they frequent certain Frankish shops on purpose to be addressed by that coveted title; and Pera attracts them as a light attracts moths. They seek to know Frankish women in order to learn from them something of the splendors and amusements of their world, but it is not only the varied and feverish life of gayety that attracts them; more often it is the domestic life, the little world of a European family, the circle of friends, the table surrounded with children, the honored and beloved old age; that sanctuary full of memories, of confidence, and tenderness, that can make the union of two persons good even without the passion of love; to which we turn even after a long life of aberration and faults; in which, even among the tempests of youth and the pangs of the present, the heart finds refuge and comfort, as a promise of peace for later years, the beauty of a serene sunset seen from the depths of some dark valley.

But there is one great thing to be said for the comfort of those who lament the fate of the Turkish woman; it is that polygamy is declining from day to day. It has always been considered by the Turks themselves rather as a tolerated abuse than as a natural right of man. Mahomet said:—That man is to be praised who has but one single wife,—although he himself had several; and those who wish to set an example of hon-

est and austere manners never in fact marry but one wife. He who has more than one is not openly blamed, but neither is he approved. The Turks are few who sustain polygamy, and still fewer those who approve it in their hearts. All those who are in a social position which imposes a certain respectability and dignity of life have but one wife. The higher officers of the ministry, those of the army, magistrates, and men of religion all have but one. Four-fifths of the Turks of Constantinople are against polygamy. The fact is here: that the transformation of Turkish society is not possible without the redemption of the woman, that this is not practicable without the fall of polygamy, and that polygamy must fall. It is probable that no voice would be raised if a decree of the Sultan were to suppress it to-morrow. The edifice is rotten and must fall. The new dawn already tinges the terraces of the harem with rose. Hope, O lovely *hanums!* The doors of the *selamlik* will be opened, the grates will fall, the *feredjè* will go to decorate the museum of the Grand Bazaar, the eunuch will become a mere black memory of childhood, and you shall freely display to the world the graces of your visages and the treasures of your minds; and then, when "the pearls of the Orient" are spoken of in Europe, to you, O white hanums, will be the allusion! to you, beautiful Mussulmans, gentle, witty and cultured; not to the useless pearls that encircle your foreheads in the midst of the cold pomp of the harem. Courage! then, for the sun is rising. As for me—and this I say for my incredulous friends, I have not yet renounced the hope of giving my arm to the wife of a Pashà in the streets of Turin, and of conducting her for a walk on the banks of the Po, reciting to her meanwhile a chapter from the *Promessi Sposi*.

YANGHEN VAR.

I WAS dreaming about this very walk towards five o'clock in the morning, in my chamber at the Hotel of Byzantium, and between sleeping and waking, beholding from afar the hill of Superga, was beginning to repeat to my travelling *hanum:* "That branch of the lake of Como which turns towards the south between two uninterrupted chains—" when there appeared before me, clothed in white, and bearing a candle in his hand, the figure of my friend Yanck, who demanded of me in great amazement:—"What *is* going on in Constantinople to-night?" Listening, I could hear a confused and hollow sound proceeding from the street, a noise of footsteps on the [illegible], a murmur, and a hurry, like that which prevails in the city. From my window I could discern a crowd of people hurrying towards the Golden Horn. Going out on the landing, I seized a Greek waiter who was in the act of rushing precipitately down the stairs, and demanded what was happening. He tore himself from my grasp, exclaiming:—"*Yanghen Var, per Dio!* don't you hear the cry?" and then vanishing he called back, "Look at the top of the Tower of Galata." I returned to my window, and looking towards Galata saw all the upper portion of the Tower illuminated by a vivid crimson light, and a great black cloud rising from the neighboring houses spreading rapidly over the starry sky, and carrying in its bosom a whirl of sparks.

Suddenly came the thought of the formidable conflagrations of Constantinople, and especially that awful one of four years ago, and our first sentiment was one of terror and compassion. But immediately after came—I blush to confess it—one more cruel and egotistical—the curiosity of the painter and the describer, and—this also I confess—we exchanged a smile that Doré might have caught and fixed upon the face of one of his Dantesque demons.

In furious haste we dressed and descended into the main street of Pera. But our curiosity, unfortunately for us, was delusive. We had not reached the tower of Galata when the fire was out. Two small houses were still burning a little; people were beginning to go home; the streets were running with water from the engines, and encumbered with furniture and bedding, amid which in the grey light of morning, men and women, in shirt and chemise, were coming and going, shivering with cold, and screaming in discordant voices, and a dozen different languages, their terror at the peril past. Seeing that all was over, we went towards the bridge to console ourselves, for our disappointment, with the sunrise.

The sky had scarcely begun to grow light beyond the hills of Asia. Stamboul, but a little before alarmed at the first announcement of the fire, had already sunk again into silence and repose. The shores and bridge were deserted; the Golden Horn slept, covered with a light mist and immersed in profound silence. No boat moved, no bird flew, no tree murmured, no breath disturbed the stillness. The interminable azure city, mute and veiled, seemed painted on the air, and looked as if it would vanish at a word. Constantinople had never appeared

to us in that airy and mysterious aspect; never before had so vivid an image been presented to us of the fabulous city of Oriental story, which the pilgrim sees rise suddenly before him, and in which he finds a motionless, petrified people in all the infinite attitudes of gay and busy life, turned to stone by the vengeance of the king of the genii. We leaned upon the railing of the bridge, contemplating the marvellous scene, and forgetting the fire, when from beyond the Golden Horn came first a faint confused sound, like the voice of a person in distress, and then a burst of cries, shrill and piercing:—Allah! Allah! Allah!—which resounded suddenly in the immense and silent void of the roadstead, and at the same moment there appeared upon the opposite shore a crowd of yelling and sinister-looking people who rushed upon the bridge.

"*Tulumbadgi!*" Firemen—cried one of the watchmen on the bridge.

We drew on one side. A horde of half-naked savages, with bare heads, and hairy breasts, reeking with sweat, old and young, blacks, dwarfs, and hirsute giants, with such faces as we are wont to assign to assassins and thieves, four of whom bore upon their shoulders a small engine or pump, that looked like a child's bier; armed with long hooked poles, coils of rope, axes, and picks, they passed before us, shrieking and yelling, with dilated eyes, flying hair, and trailing rags, pressing together, impetuous and grim, and exhaling an odor as of wild beasts, disappearing into the street of Galata, whence came to our ears their last faint cry of Allah! and then the deep silence fell again.

But only for a moment; for presently it was again broken,

and a similar crowd passed by, and a third, and a fourth, and again and again the prolonged and lamentable cry of "Allah!" floated back from the street of Pera, followed by a mortal silence. Finally, last of all came the madman of Pera, naked from head to heel, shivering in the cold, and uttering piercing yells, followed by a number of Turkish boys who vanished with him and the firemen among the houses of the Frankish shore; and over the great city, gilded by the first rays of the sun, descended and reigned once more that noble silence. In a little while the sun rose, the muezzins were heard from the minarets, caiques darted here and there, the port awoke, people began to pass over the bridge, the low murmur of life arose in the streets of the town, and we returned to Pera. But the image of that great sleeping city, of that faintly irradiated horizon, of that solemn peacefulness, and of those savage hordes, remains so deeply stamped upon my memory, that to this day it rises before me, veiled in a mist of fear and astonishment, like a vision of Stamboul in past centuries, seen in an opium dream.

So I did not see the spectacle of conflagration at Constantinople; but if I did not see it with my eyes, I knew so many witnesses of that which destroyed Pera in 1870, that I may say I saw it through their eyes, and may describe it almost as if I had been a spectator.

The first flame broke out in a small house in the street of *Feridié* in Pera, on the fifth of June, at a time when most of the well to do population are out of town; at one o'clock in the afternoon, when almost all the inhabitants of the city are taking their *siesta*. There was no one in the house but an old servant woman, who as soon as she saw the flame rushed out into

the street screaming, "Fire! Fire!" The people in the neighboring houses ran at once with buckets and small pumps —the stupid law prohibiting the extinction of a fire before the arrival of the officials from the Seraskiarat having fallen into disuse—and all rushed to the nearest fountain for water. The fountains of Pera, from which the water-carriers at stated hours supply the people of each quarter, were at this hour closed, and the official who has the keys may not use them without permission of the authorities. At that very moment, a Turkish guard of the municipality of Pera had the keys in his pocket, and stood near the fountain, an impressive spectator of the scene. The excited crowd surrounded him and summoned him to open. He refused to do so without the necessary authority. They pressed about him, threatened him, seized him; he struggled and resisted, declaring that they should take the keys only from his dead body. Meantime the flames were spreading and had already attacked the neighboring houses. The news of the conflagration spread from quarter to quarter. From the summit of the Tower of Galata were displayed the crimson *ceste** which intimated that a fire was in progress in the city. The city guards ran about the streets, beating their long staves upon the stones and calling out the sinister cry:—*Yanghen var!*—Fire is here! answered by the rapid roll of drums from the barracks. The cannon from *Top-hané* announced the danger by three tremendous explosions. The Seraskiarat, the Seraglio, the Embassies, all Pera and all Galata are upside down; and in a few minutes, hotly spurring, the minister of war, with a cloud of officers and an army of firemen, arrives in the street

* The translator is at a loss for this word. The dictionary gives *baskets*.

of Feridié, and hastily begin their work. But as usual in such cases, the first attempts are futile. The narrow street prevents free movement, the engines are useless, the water too far off and insufficient; the firemen, ill disciplined, are more intent upon fishing in the troubled waters on their own account, than on doing their duty; and as it happens that an Armenian holiday is going on at Beicos, there are very few porters to transport the goods. Also there were then more wooden houses than there are now, and the stone and brick houses had inflammable roofs. The population of the quarter was almost entirely Christian, and therefore lost their heads at once, whereas the Mussulmans on such occasions being fatalists, if they do not aid, at least stand quietly by and do not impede the efforts of others. An hour had scarcely passed from the first alarm, when the whole street was in flames, and the officials and firemen were everywhere retreating, leaving some dead and wounded on the field. A great wind blew that day and beat down the flames in great horizontal waves, like curtains, enveloping the houses from the roofs downwards. Families secure in the belief that they had ample time to save their property, heard the roof crackle over them, and escaped only with their lives. The fire did not run, but flew, and overwhelmed its prey like a sea. In three hours one-half of Pera was in flames. The streets of the burning quarters were warring furnaces over which the fire made a sort of tent, whilst the glazed balconies of the houses and the wooden minarets of the smaller mosques melted before it and disappeared like unsubstantial things.

By the still accessible streets, lancers on horseback passed in hot haste, like spectres illuminated by infernal fires, carrying

orders from the Seraskiarat. Officers from the Seraglio, with uncovered heads and scorched uniforms, riderless horses, troops of porters laden with goods, hordes of howling dogs, weeping people flying before the flames, appeared and disappeared among the smoke and flame like legions of lost spirits. For one instant, at the entrance of a burning street, motionless upon his horse, and pale as a corpse, was seen the Sultan Abdul-Aziz, surrounded by his escort, and with dilated eyes fixed upon the flames as if like Selim First he were muttering to himself—"I feel the burning breath of my victims! It is destroying my city, my Seraglio, and myself!"—And still the flames advanced victoriously in spite of every effort to restrain them; driving before them firemen, soldiers, and citizens. Nor were there wanting in that horrible confusion, splendid acts of courage and humanity. The white veils of the Sisters of Charity were seen every where among the ruins, bending above the wounded and dying; Turks rushed into the flames, and brought out Christian children; another Mussulman standing with folded arms in the midst of a group of despairing people, offered calmly large sums of money to any who would save a Christian boy in one of the burning houses; some went about in groups picking up lost children; others opened their houses to the fugitives; and more than one gave an example of courage and scorn of worldly goods; remaining seated on a mat in the street tranquilly smoking, while their property blazed before them; retreating slowly and with supreme indifference as the fire advanced.

And but a short distance from this hell, the serene majesty of Stamboul and the spring loveliness of the Asiatic shore looked smiling on, while an immense crowd that blackened all

the shore; gazed mute and impassible at the frightful spectacle; the muezzins announced in slow musical chant the close of day; birds circled round and round the mosques of the seven hills, and old Turks seated under the plane trees on the green heights of Scutari, murmured submissively:—"The last day of the city of the Sultans has come! The sentence of Allah is fulfilled! Amen! Amen!"

The conflagration fortunately was not protracted into the night. At seven o'clock the English Embassy took fire, after which the wind went down, and the flames died out on every side as suddenly as they had mounted. In six hours two-thirds of Pera had been destroyed to their foundations, nine thousand houses reduced to ashes, and two thousand persons killed.

In former times when a fire broke out at Constantinople, if the Sultan was in his harem at the time, the news of the danger was brought to him by an *odalisque* all dressed in crimson from head to heel, who had orders to present herself before him wherever he might be. She had only to appear in the door; the color of her garments conveyed the mute announcement of misfortune. Among the many grand and terrible images which rise before me at the thought of the burning of Constantinople, the figure of this *odalisque* is always the most prominent. I shall never cease to entreat all painters to paint the picture as I see it, until I can find one who falls in love with it, and to him I shall be forever grateful. He will represent a room in the Imperial harem, hung with satin, and softly lighted, where upon a large divan, beside a blonde Circassian girl, is seated Selim the First, the great Sultan. Tearing himself from the arms of his love, he fixes his eyes full of wrath and dismay

upon the crimson *odalisque*, who, mute, sinister and rigid, r n the threshold, with pallid, statuesque face, filled with dread d veneration, seems to say:—"King of kings! Allah calls t e, and thy desolate people await thee!" and beyond the lifted curtains of the door can be seen, in the blue distance, the flaming city.

THE WALLS.

THE circuit of the walls of Stamboul I chose to make alone, and I should advise Italians, and others going to Constantinople, to imitate me, because the spectacle of those grand lonely ruins will not leave a profound and enduring impression except upon the mind that is ready to receive it, and freely follows the course of its own meditations in silence. It is a walk of about fifteen Italian miles, through deserted streets or roads, under the rays of the sun.—"Perhaps" I said to my friend—"the sadness of my solitude may overwhelm me on the way, and I may invoke you as a Saint; but any way, I want to go alone."

I reduced the contents of my pocket to a minimum in case that any suburban thief should take a fancy to examine them, swallowed a morsel of food, and began my journey at eight o'clock in the morning, under a sky washed clear by a shower in the night, proceeding towards the bridge of the Sultana Validé.

My purpose was to leave Stamboul by the gate of the Blacherne quarter, to follow the line of the walls from the Golden Horn as far as the Castle of the Seven Towers, and to return along the shore of the Sea of Marmora, thus going round the whole great triangle of the Mussulman city.

Turning to the right after crossing the bridge, I found myself in the vast quarter called *Istambul-di-sciaré*, or external Stamboul, which is a long strip of city between the wall and the port,

made up of small houses and stores for oil and wood, which have been more than once destroyed by fire. The walls remaining on this side of the city are about five times the height of a man, battlemented and flanked at every hundred paces by small quadrangular towers, and falling into ruin; but this is the noteworthy part of the walls of Stamboul, both from an artistic and historic point of view. Crossing the quarter of the Fanar, and passing by the shore thronged with fruit and pastry venders, sellers of anise and rosolio, and open air kitchens, in the midst of handsome Greek sailors looking like the statues of their ancient gods, I skirted the vast ghetto of Balata; threaded the silent quarter of the Blacherne, and finally came out of the city by the gate called Egri-Kapù, not far from the shore of the Golden Horn.

All this is quickly told, but it took me one hour and a half to do, and was accomplished with no other guides than the points of the minarets of the mosque of Selim. At a certain point I saw no more Turkish faces or dresses; then European houses disappeared, then pavements, then the shop signs, then the names of the streets, and finally all sound of labor. As I went on, the dogs looked at me more and more suspiciously. Turkish boys stared with bolder eyes, women of the people drew their veils closer, and I finally found myself in the midst of Asiatic barbarism, after a walk of two hours that seemed a journey of two days.

Turning to the left of Egri-Kapù I came upon a large tract of that famous wall that defends Stamboul on the land side. The line of walls and enormous towers extends as far as the eye can see, rising and descending with the inequalities of the ground;

here so low that it seems sinking into the earth, and there so lofty that it appears to crown the summit of a mountain; varied by infinite forms of ruin, tinted with many deep and sombre colors, from black to warm, almost golden yellow, and clothed by a redundant vegetation of dark green, that climbs about the wall, falling in garlands from the battlements and loop-holes, rising in rich masses and pyramids of verdure, hanging in draperies, rushing in cascades, filling every crack and fissure, and advancing even into the road. There are three ranges of walls forming a gigantic series of ruined steps; the interior wall, which is the highest, flanked at equal distances with square towers; the middle wall reinforced by small round towers; and the external wall without towers, very low, and defended by a wide and deep ditch that was once filled by the waters of the sea, but is now covered with grass and weeds. All three remain much in the same condition that they were in after the taking of Constantinople, for the restorations that were made by Mahomet and Bajazet Second are very unimportant. The breaches made by the enormous guns of Orbano may still be seen, as well as the marks of rams and catapults, mines, and all the indications of the points where the assaults had been most furious and the resistance most desperate. The round towers of the middle wall are almost all ruined to their foundations; those of the interior wall are nearly all standing, but so broken and riddled that they resemble enormous trunks of lightning-struck trees, or great rocks that have been washed by the sea. Immense masses of masonry rolling down upon the middle and outer wall, encumber the platform and the ditch. Footpaths wind here and there among the fragments and the

weeds and are lost in the dark shadows of the hanging vegetation. Every bit of bastion framed between two towers is a stupendous picture of verdure and ruin, full of majesty and grandeur. It is all colossal, savage, threatening, and impressed with a mournful beauty that is very imposing. The Constantinople of to-day has vanished, and the city of Constantine is before us; we breathe the air of the fifth century; the thoughts cluster round the day of that immense disaster and the present is forgotten.

The gate by which I came out, called by the Turks Egri-Kapù, was that famous Caligaria gate by which Justinian made his triumphal entry, and Alexis Comnenus came to take possession of the throne. In front of it there is now a Mussulman cemetery. In the first days of the siege the great cannon of Orbano was planted there, around which labored four hundred artillerymen, and which one hundred oxen dragged with difficulty. The gate was defended by Theodore di Caristo and Giovanni Greant against the left wing of the Turkish army, that extended as far as the Golden Horn. From this point to the Sea of Marmora there is not a sign of habitation. The road runs straight and solitary between the walls and the open country. I walked for some distance between two cemeteries, Christian on the one hand, Mohammedan on the other. The sun scorched; the road stretched away before me white and lonely, and gradually ascending cut the limpid sky with a straight line. On one side tower succeeded tower, on the other tomb gave place to tomb. There was no sound but my own regular footfall and the murmur of winged insects among the weeds. At length I suddenly found myself before a fine square gate sur-

mounted by a lofty arch and flanked by two octagonal towers. It was the gate of Adrianople, the Polyandria of the Greeks; the same which sustained in 625, under Heraclius, the formidable attack of the Avari, which was defended against Mahomet Second by the brothers Paul and Antonio Troilo Bochiardi, and which then became the gate for the triumphal exits and entrances of the Mussulman army. There was no living creature near. Suddenly two Turkish horsemen galloped out, enveloped me in a cloud of dust, and vanished on the road to Adrianople; and profound silence reigned once more.

Turning my back to the wall at this point, I followed the Adrianople road, and descending into the valley of the Lykus, mounted a rising ground and looked out over the vast and arid plain of Dahud-Pashà, where Mahomet Second had his headquarters during the siege of Constantinople.

There once beat the heart of all that enormous army that held in its formidable embrace the great city in its dying throes. From thence sped the orders that moved the arms of a hundred thousand laborers, dragging over land two hundred galleys from the bay of Besci-tass to the bay of Kassim-Pashà; that sent into the bowels of the earth armies of Armenian miners, and in the time that is taken to count the beads of a rosary, drew three hundred thousand bows and unsheathed as many scimetars. There the pale messengers of Constantine met the Genoese from Galata coming to sell their oil for refreshing the cannon of Orbano, and the Mussulman *vedettes* set to watch the Sea of Marmora, if perchance they might see against the horizon the European fleet coming to bring succor to Christendom behind the last rampart of the Constantines. There swarmed the rene-

gade Christians, Asiatic adventurers, aged sheiks, and meagre dervishes that thronged about the tents of the fourteen thousand janissaries, and mingled with the horses and camels, the catapults and *balistas*, fragments of exploded guns and heaps of stone cannon balls, while toil-worn soldiers carried two and two from the walls, the deformed bodies of dead and wounded, amid a perpetual cloud of smoke. In the midst of the encampment of the janissaries rose the many-tinted tents of the court, and above these the flame-colored pavilion of Mahomet Second. Every morning at sunrise he was there at the entrance of his tent, pale with his vigils of the night, in his long blood-colored robe, and his turban plumed with yellow, and fixed his eagle glance upon the doomed city. Beside him was Orbano, the inventor of the monster gun, which in a few days was to explode and blow his bones over the plain of the Hippodrome. There too was the admiral, Balta-Ogli, already pursued by the presentiment of a defeat which was to draw down upon his head the wrath and the golden baton of the Grand Signor; and all around thronged the flower of that Asiatic multitude, full of youthful force and ferocity, ready to rush like a river of steel and flame upon the decrepit remnant of the Byzantine Empire; and all, motionless as statues in the first rosy rays of dawn, gazed at the thousand silvered domes of the city promised by the Prophet, where at that hour the prayers and sobs of the coward people were rising in vain to heaven. I saw them all, their attitudes, the folds of their strange garments, and the long shadows they cast over the earth. Suddenly my eyes fell upon a large stone at my feet whereon I read a half effaced inscription, and the fantastic vision vanished, only to give place to another. The plain swarmed

with a lively multitude of French soldiers in their red trousers; I heard the songs of Provence and Normandy; I saw Marshals St. Arnaud, Canrobert, Espinasse, Pelissier; I recognized faces and voices dear to my remembrance,—and read once more with pleasure and surprise, the poor inscription :—"*Eugène Saccard, Corporal in the 22d Light Horse, June* 16, 1854."

From thence I returned to the road that skirts the walls, and passing the ancient military gate of Pempti, now walled up, I crossed the river Lykus which enters the city at that point, and arrived finally before the cannon gate, against which Mahomet's army made their final assault. Here behind the battlements I saw horrible black faces peering down at me with an amazed expression, which faces turned out to belong to a tribe of gypsies who had there made a nest among the ruins. The traces of the tremendous struggle are here very marked, colossal fragments of the masonry lying here and there like the relics of a fallen mountain. The battle might have been fought yesterday, and the ruins have a more than human voice to tell of the horrible slaughter that they witnessed. And all the gates could tell the same tale. The struggle began at dawn of day. The Ottoman army was divided into four columns, and preceded by an advanced guard of a hundred thousand volunteers, predestined to death. All this food for cannon—this wild, undisciplined crowd of Tartars, Arabs, Caucasians and negroes, led by sheiks, excited by dervishes, and driven onward by the whips of an army of *sciaùs*, rushed first to the assault, laden with earth and fascines, and forming one unbroken chain from the Sea of Marmora to the Golden Horn. Arrived upon the edge of the ditch or moat, a hail storm of stone and iron arrested and mowed

them down; but other hordes succeeded them, driven on by others still behind them; in a little while the moat was filled with a bloody writhing mass, over which the army rushed in a torrent, beating its wild waves against the walls and towers, until the savage blare of the Ottoman trumpets was heard above the din of battle, and the advanced guard retreated in confusion all along the line. Then Mahomet Second let loose his strength. Three great armies, three human torrents, led by a hundred Pashàs, with a deafening noise of trumpets and cymbals, and a shout of *La Ilah illa lah!* precipitated themselves against the walls, as the ocean in a storm breaks upon a rocky coast. From time to time, as the battle raged around the gates, in the breaches, in the moat, on the platforms, or when for a moment the hideous tumult relaxed as if to take breath, the purple mantle of Constantine could be seen waving, or a bright gleam shot from the armor of Justinian, or Francis of Toledo, and the terrible figures of the three hundred Genoese archers appeared confusedly through the smoke.

At last the assailants, thinned and weakened, began to retreat and scatter, and a shout of victory, and a solemn chant of thanksgiving arose from the walls. From the heights before San Romano, Mahomet Second, surrounded by his janissaries, saw and for one instant hesitated. But throwing a glance around at his formidable soldiers, who trembled with impatient ire as they watched his face, he rose in his stirrups, and once more shouted his battle-cry. Then was the vengeance of God unchained. The janissaries answered with fourteen thousand shouts in one; the columns moved; a throng of dervishes spread themselves throughout the camp to re-animate the cour-

age of the men, the *sciàs* stopped the fugitives, the Pashàs reformed their lines, the Sultan himself brandishing his iron mace advanced amid a splendor of scimetars and bows, and a sea of casques and turbans; Justinian, wounded, vanished from the walls; the Genoese, disheartened, retreated; the gigantic janissary Hassan d'Olubad was the first to scale the rampart; Constantine, desperately fighting in the midst of the last of his brave Moreans, is thrown from the battlements, but continues to fight under the gate, to the last moment; the Empire of the East has fallen. Tradition says that a great tree marks the spot where Constantine's body was found; but there is no longer any trace of it. There, where the earth was once dyed deep in blood, grew a thick carpet of daisies and wild flowers and a cloud of butterflies hovered. I gathered a blossom for remembrance, under the astonished eyes of the gypsies, and went on my way.

The walls still extended before me as far as eye could see. At their highest parts they hid the city completely, so that no one could imagine that behind those solitary and silent bastions lay a vast metropolis, inhabited by many people. Where they were lower, on the contrary, appeared the silvery tops of minarets and domes, roofs of Greek churches, and the topmost boughs of trees. Here and there through an opening in the curtain of the wall, a fugitive glimpse of the city with its houses and gardens, or the more distant and fantastic outlines of Stamboul, seemed as though a door had been suddenly opened and shut again. At this point the walls are in better preservation. There are long portions of the curtain of Theodosius Second almost intact; beautiful towers of the Emperor Ciro Constan-

tine, which still bear gloriously upon their invulnerable heads their crowns of fifteen centuries, and seem to defy a new assault. At some places, on the platforms, peasants have built their huts, which in their smallness and fragility give new force to the majestic solidity of the walls, and look like birds' nests on the flanks of a mountain.

The gate called Yeni-Mewlehane, where I next arrived, is so named from a famous convent of dervishes near it: it is a low gate in which are set four marble columns, and at its sides are two square towers, with an inscription of Ciro Constantine 447, and one of Justinian Second and Sophia, in which the imperial names are misspelled; a curious instance of the barbaric ignorance of the fifth century. There was no living soul either in the gateway, or the wall, or about the convent, or in the cemetery.

I would give the remembrance of the finest view in Constantinople, if I could convey to the reader an idea of the deep and singular emotions that I experienced as I thus walked on between two endless chains of ruins and of sepulchres, in that awful solitude, that brooding peace. Many times in my life, in melancholy mood, I have imagined myself one of a caravan of mute and mysterious beings eternally going onward, through an unknown country, towards an unknown end. This road seemed the reality of my dream. I could have gone on forever. It did not make me sad, but rather inspired me with serenity and courage. The vigorous colors of the vegetation, the cyclopian masses of the walls, the long waving lines of open country, like a stormy ocean, the solemn memories of emperors and armies, of titanic struggles, scattered peoples, defunct generations, be-

side that enormous city, in that mortal silence, broken only by the beat of the eagle's wing as he clove the air above me, all conspired to excite my imagination and redouble my sense of life.

The next gate is the ancient military one of Trite, now closed. Its curtains and towers show traces of heavy artillery, and it is believed that here was one of the three breaches which Mahomet Second pointed out to his army before the assault, saying:—"You can enter Constantinople on horseback by the three breaches which I have opened." Next comes an open gate, flanked by two octagon towers, and recognizable by its small bridge of three arches of a fine gold color as the Selivri gate, from which ran the high road to the city of Selybmria (*sic*) a name changed by the Turks to Selivri. During the siege this gate was defended by the Genoese captain, Maurice Cattaneo. The road still retains some traces of the pavement laid down by Justinian. In front there is a vast cemetery and the noted monastery of Balukl\u00f9.

In the cemetery I came upon the solitary spot where are buried the head of the famous Pash\u00e0 of Janina, Ali of Tepelen; those of his sons, Veli, governor of Tirhala; Muctar, commandant of Arlonia; Saalih, commandant of Lepanto; and that of his nephew Mehemet, son of Veli, commandant of Delvina. There are five small columns surmounted by turbans, all bearing the date of 827, and a simple inscription, written by the poor dervish Soliman, Ali's friend from childhood, who bought the heads after they had been exposed on the battlements of the Seraglio, and buried them with his own hands. The inscription on the cippus of Ali, runs thus:—"Here lies the head of the famous

Ali Pashà of Tepelen, governor of Janina, who for more than fifty years labored for the independence of Albania." Which proves that even on Mussulman tombstones pious falsehoods may be found. I stopped a moment to contemplate the handful of earth that covered that formidable head, and Hamlet's words to Yorick's skull came into my mind. Where are thy Palikari now, Lion of Epirus? Where are thy brave arnauts, and thy palaces bristling with cannon, and thy beautiful kiosks reflected in the waters of the lake of Janina, and thy treasures buried in the rock, and the lovely eyes of thy Vasiliki? And I was thinking of the poor lady wandering through the streets of Constantinople, desolate with a remembrance of her lost happiness and fallen greatness, when I heard a slight rustle behind me, and turning beheld a tall angular figure, dressed in a long dark gown, with uncovered head, who was looking at me with a questioning air. From a sign that he made I comprehended that he was a monk of Balukli who wished to show me the miraculous fountain, and I followed him towards his monastery.

He conducted me across a silent courtyard, opened a small door, lighted a taper, made me descend with him a flight of steps into a damp dark cellar, and there halted before a kind of cistern, where shading the light with his hand, he pointed out to me the red fish darting through the water. As I looked, he mumbled some incomprehensible jargon which I suppose was the story of the famous miracle of the fish. While the Mussulmans were making their last assault upon the walls of Constantinople, a Greek monk in this convent was frying fish. Suddenly at the door of the kitchen appeared another monk, in a high state of excitement, who called out:—"The city is taken!"

"*Che!*" replied the one at the frying-pan, "I will believe that when I see my fish jump out of the pan." And immediately the fish jumped out, all alive, half brown and half red because they were only cooked on one side; and they were religiously replaced in the cistern, as may be supposed, and there they may be seen to this day. His mumbling over, my monk threw a few drops of the sacred water into my face, whence they trickled into his hand in the shape of small coin, and accompanying me to the door, stood for a moment looking after me, with his little sleepy, tired-looking eyes.

And still on one side walls upon walls and towers upon towers, and on the other shady cemeteries, green fields and vineyards, a closed house or two, and beyond, the desert. The vegetation is here marvellous. Great leafy trees start from the towers as from gigantic vases; red and yellow blossoms and garlands of ivy and honeysuckle hang from the battlements, and below grows an inextricable tangle of weeds and wild shrubs, from the midst of which spring plane trees and willows shading the moat and the road. Large tracts of wall are completely covered with ivy, holding the stones together like a vast net, and hiding their wounds and fissures. The moat is here and there laid out in kitchen gardens, and on the edges goats and sheep are feeding guarded by Greek boys lying in the shade of the trees; flocks of birds nest in the walls; the air is full of the pungent fragrance of wild herbs; and a sort of spring-like joyousness seems to breathe from the ruins, that look as if they were decorated with flowers and garlands for the passage of a Sultana. Suddenly I felt upon my face a puff of salt air, and raising my eyes beheld the Sea of Marmora lying blue before me.

Passing by the ancient gate of Deleutera, and that of Melandesia, I found myself in front of the Castle of the Seven Towers.

This edifice of evil fame, raised by Mahomet Second upon the antique Cyclobion of the Greeks, to defend the city at the point where the land wall joins the sea wall, was converted into a state prison, as soon as the conquests of the Sultan had assured Stamboul against the dangers of a siege. It is now nothing but a skeleton of a castle, guarded by a few soldiers; an accursed ruin, full of painful and horrible memories, that live in sinister legend on the lips of the people of Constantinople, and is seldom seen by travellers except for a moment from the prow of the vessel that carries them to the Golden Horn. The Turks call it Jedi-Kulé, and it is for them what the Bastile was to the French, and the Tower of London to the English; a monument recalling the worst epochs of the tyranny of the Sultans.

The walls of the city hide it from the eyes of those who look at it from the road, excepting two of the seven great towers that gave it its name, of which there are now only four entire. In the external walls there are still remaining two Corinthian columns which belonged to the ancient gilded gate by which Heraclius and Narsetes made their triumphal entry, and according to a legend common to both Mussulmans and Greeks, it is also the same by which the Christians passed when they re-entered the city of Constantine victorious. The entrance door is in a small square tower, where a slippered sentinel dozes, who generally permits the entrance of a coin into his pocket, and a traveller into the tower at one and the same moment.

Entering, I found myself alone in a large enclosure, having a gloomy look of prison and cemetery that made me stay my steps. All around rose enormous black walls forming a pentagon, crowned with square and round towers, some high, some low, some dislocated, others entire and covered with conical roofs of lead, and with innumerable ruined stairs that led to battlements and loop-holes. Within the enclosure the vegetation is high and thick, dominated by a group of cypress and plane trees, and the minarets of a small mosque; lower down the roofs of a cluster of huts where the soldiers sleep; in the middle the tomb of a vizier who was strangled in the castle; here and there the remains of an ancient redoubt; and among the weeds or along the walls, fragments of bas-reliefs, pieces of columns and capitals sunk in the ground, and half covered with grass and pools of water; a strange and gloomy disorder, full of mystery and menace, most repugnant to the sight. I advanced with circumspection, as if fearing to put my foot in a pool of blood. The cabins were tenantless, the mosque shut up, everything quiet and solitary, as in an abandoned ruin. On the walls there are still here and there traces of Greek crosses, fragments of monograms of Constantine, the spread wings of the Roman eagles, and the remains of friezes of the antique Byzantine edifice. Upon some stones may be seen Greek sentences rudely cut in minute characters; almost all inscribed by the soldiers of Constantine, who guarded this fortress under the command of the Florentine Giuliani, on the day before the fall of Constantinople; poor souls resigned to death, invoking God to save their city from the sack and their families from slavery.

Of the two towers behind the Gilded Gate, one is that in

which the ambassadors from states that were at war with the Sultan were shut up, and there are Latin inscriptions on the walls, the most recent one being that of the Venetian Ambassadors imprisoned there in the reign of Ahmed Third, when the war in the Morea broke out. The other is the famous tower to which all the most dismal traditions of the castle are referred; a labyrinth of horrible dungeons, living sepulchres, where viziers and great ones of the court waited, praying in the darkness, for the coming of the executioner, or driven mad by despair, dashed out their brains against the walls. In one of these dungeons was the great mortar in which the bones and flesh of the *ulemas* were pounded. On the ground floor is a large round chamber, called the bloody prison, where the condemned were secretly decapitated, and their heads thrown into a well, called the well of blood, the mouth of which may still be seen in the rude pavement, covered by a stone slab. Beneath this was the so-called rocky cavern, lighted by a lantern hanging from the roof, where those condemned to be tortured had their flesh peeled off in strips, where burning pitch was poured into the wounds made by the whip, and feet and hands were struck off, the horrid shrieks of those in agony reaching the ears of the prisoners above, in faint lamenting tones. In one corner of the inner court may still be seen the traces of a smaller enclosure, where the heads of the condemned commonalty were struck off in the night; and near by, not very long ago, there existed a mass of human bones that rose nearly as high as the castle platform. Near the entrance is the prison of Othman Second, the first imperial victim of the janissaries. In all the other towers, and in the thickness of the walls there is a net-work of

dark corridors, secret stairways, and low doors studded with iron, under whose frowning archways how many of the great ones of the earth, in the flower of their youth, and the fullness of their power, have passed never more to return! One feels a vivid sense of pleasure at the sight of this den of infamy and cruelty now so deformed and ruined. The disarmed and decrepit monster gapes with the hundred mouths of its loop-holes and low door-ways, reduced to a mere scare-crow, and myriads of toads, rats, and scorpions swarm in its empty dungeons, or rustle among the insolent vegetation that wreaths and plumes its hideousness as if in mockery. After having looked in at various doors without seeing anything but a precipitous flight of rats and mice, I mounted by an old mossy flight of steps to the top of the western wall. From thence I looked down upon the castle in all its ruin and decay, a disorderly black and dark red mass of stones, set in a ring of vivid green. As I stood there in the deep silence, and the brooding light, dreaming of the horrors that had been perpetrated in that accursed place, the muezzin raised his clear penetrating voice from the minaret of the little mosque. That slow, sweet, solemn voice, calling upon God, at that moment, in that fearful place, spoke to the very depths of my soul! It seemed to me to be saying in the names of all those who had there been doomed to death, that their suffering had not been in vain, that their last tears had been gathered up, that their tortures had been recompensed, that they forgave as they had been forgiven, that God remains when the world abandons us, and that all is vanity on this earth except this sentiment of infinite love and compassion. I went out of the castle much moved.

Resuming my march towards the sea along the outer wall, I came to the railway station of Adrianople, where various lines meet and cross one another. There were long files of dusty carriages, but no living being that I could see. Had I been a fanatical Turk, now, enemy to all European innovations, I might have set fire to the place and its contents, and have departed unmolested. I walked on expecting every moment to hear the threatening shout of some watchful guardian, but no one accosted me. I had imagined that I could enter Stamboul a little further on where the wall ends, but was deluded. The sea wall and the land wall met, and there was not the ghost of a gate. So I was obliged to return to the gate of the Seven Towers, and traverse the whole of Stamboul along the shore of the Sea of Marmora. Quite worn out with fatigue, my heart bounded with pleasure, when after a weary walk through the most desolate quarters of the city, I emerged at last upon the square of St. Sophia, and saw my Italian friends standing in a group before a café, and advancing to meet me with beaming faces and extended hands.

THE OLD SERAGLIO.

As at Granada before having seen the Alhambra, so at Constantinople one feels as if he had seen nothing until he has been within the walls of the Old Seraglio. Twenty times a day, and from all points of the city and the sea, that greenest of hills is seen, full of promises and secrets, attracting the eye, and tormenting the imagination like an enigma, until one ends by going there before the appointed day, more to get rid of its haunting presence than in search of a pleasure.

There is not indeed in all Europe another corner of the earth whose name alone awakens in the mind so strange a confusion of beautiful and terrible images; about which so much has been thought, and written, and divined; which has given rise to so many vague and contradictory notices; which is still the object of so much insatiable curiosity, of so many insensate prejudices, and so many marvellous histories. Now-a-days every body can go in, and many come out with their expectations somewhat chilled. But we may be sure that for centuries yet to come, when perhaps the Ottoman domination shall be but a reminiscence in Europe, and upon that loveliest of hills, the populous streets of a new city shall cross one another, no traveller will pass that way without seeing in his fancy the image of the Imperial palaces that once stood there, or without envying us of the nineteenth century, who still could find in

those places the vivid and speaking memories of the Ottoman reign.

Who knows how many archæologists will patiently seek out the traces of a door or a wall in the courts of the new edifices, and how many poets will write verses upon the ruins strewn along the shores of the sea! Or perhaps, after many centuries, these walls will still be jealously guarded, and the learned, and the literary, and the artistic traveller will visit them, and the picturesque and strange life that existed there for four hundred years will rise again and expand into a myriad of volumes and of pictures over the face of the earth.

It is not beauty of architecture that attracts to those walls such universal curiosity. The Seraglio is not, like the Alhambra, a great monument of art. The Court of Lions alone, of the Arab palace, is worth all the kiosks and towers of the Turk. The Seraglio is a great historic monument, which sets forth and illuminates the life of the Ottoman dynasty; which bears written upon its stones and on the trunks of its secular trees the secret chronicle of the Turkish empire. Nothing is wanting but the record of the last thirty years, and that of the two centuries which preceded the conquest of Constantinople. From Mahomet Second who laid the foundations, to Abdul-Medjid who abandoned it to inhabit the palace of Dolma Bagtché, twenty-five Sultans have lived in it. Here the dynasty planted its foot immediately upon the conquest of its European capital, here it rose to the apex of its fortune, and here began its decadence. It was at once a royal palace, a fortress, and a sanctuary; here were the brain and heart of Islamism; a city within a city, inhabited by a people and guarded by an army, embrac-

ing within its walls an infinite variety of edifices, places of pleasure or of horror; where the Sultans were born, ascended the throne, were deposed, imprisoned, strangled; where all conspiracies began and the cry of rebellion was first heard; where for three centuries the eyes of anxious Europe, timid Asia, and frightened Africa were fixed, as on a smoking volcano, threatening ruin on all sides.

This monstrous palace is placed upon the most eastern of the hills of Stamboul, which descends gently towards the sea of Marmora, the mouth of the Bosphorus, and the Golden Horn; on the spot anciently occupied by the acropolis of Byzantium, by a portion of the city, and a wing of the palace of the Emperors. It is the most beautiful of the hills and the most favored by nature of all the promontories of the European coast. Converging towards it as towards a centre, are two seas and two straits; here began the great military and commercial high roads of Eastern Europe; the aqueducts of the Byzantine Emperors brought water to it, the hills of Thrace protect it from the north winds; the sea bathes it on three sides; Galata and Scutari look upon it on either side, and the mountains of Bythinia close with their snowy tops the Asiatic horizon. It is a solitary eminence, strong and beautiful, seemingly created by nature to be the pedestal of the throne of a great monarch, almost God-like in his power.

The whole hill is encircled at its base by a battlemented wall with towers. Along the sea this wall is also the city wall; on the land side it was raised by Mahomet Second, and divides the hill of the Seraglio from that of the mosque of Nuri-Osmanié, turns at a right angle towards the Sublime Porte, passes

in front of Saint Sophia, and joins the wall of Stamboul upon the shore.

This is the external boundary of the Seraglio. The Seraglio proper stands on the summit, surrounded in its turn by high walls, forming a sort of central redoubt in the great hill fortress.

But it would be labor lost to describe the Seraglio as it is at present. The railway passes through the outer walls; a great fire in 1865 destroyed many buildings, the gardens are in great part devastated; hospitals, barracks, and military schools have been erected in them; of the remaining edifices, many have changed their form and usage; and although the principal walls are there, presenting the semblance of the old Seraglio, the alterations are such, and the neglect of thirty years has made such changes, that it is not possible to describe the place without disappointing the most modest expectation.

It is better for the writer and the reader to see that famous Seraglio again in the time of Ottoman greatness. Then whoever could embrace the whole hill in one glance, either from the battlements of one of the highest towers, or from a minaret of the mosque of Saint Sophia, enjoyed an unparalleled view. In the midst of the vivid blue of the sea, the Bosphorus, and the port, within the great semicircle of the white sails of the fleet, rose the green forest of the hill, a forest composed of enormous trees, encircled by walls and towers, and crowned with cannon and sentinels. Upon the highest point extended the vast rectangle of the Seraglio buildings, divided into three great courts, or rather into three small cities built around three unequal squares, from which arose a multitude of variously colored roofs, gilded domes

and white minarets, half concealed in groves and gardens. It was a little metropolis, brilliant and irregular, light as an encampment of tents, which had something of voluptuous, pastoral, and warlike about it; at one point full of life and movement, at another mute and solitary; here all gilded and open to the sun; there inaccessible to every eye and plunged in perpetual shade; gay with infinite fountains, embellished with a thousand colors and silvery reflections in the marbles of the colonnades, and in the waters of the little lakes.

Such was the aspect of the Imperial abode as seen from above, not so vast, but so divided and subdivided and so intricate within, that servants who had lived in it for fifty years never knew it thoroughly, and the janissaries who invaded it for the third time, lost themselves in its intricacies.

The principal entrance was and is still the Bab-Umaium, or "august gate," which opens on the small square where is the fountain of Sultan Ahmed, behind the mosque of Saint Sophia. It is a large door of white and black marble, decorated with rich arabesques, above which rises a lofty construction with eight windows covered by a projecting roof. It belongs to that mixed Arab and Persian style by which almost all the buildings erected by the Turks immediately after the conquest may be recognized, before they began to imitate Byzantine architecture. Above the door may still be read on a marble slab, the inscription placed there by Mahomet Second:—"Allah preserve eternally the glory of its possessor,"—"Allah strengthen the edifice,—Allah fortify the foundations." It was in front of this door that the people of Stamboul came every morning to see what nobles of the state and court had lost their heads during

the night. The heads were suspended from a nail within two niches that are on either side of the door, or were exposed in a silver basin near which were affixed the accusation and the sentence. In the square before this door were thrown the bodies of those who had been decapitated; and then came, waiting the order which should give them entrance into the first enclosure of the Seraglio, detachments from the distant armies, bringing trophies of victory; bloody and glittering groups bearing arms, banners, heads of conquered captains, and splendid military insignia. The door was guarded by a large company of *capigi*, sons of nobles, pompously arrayed; who looked on from the windows and over the wall at the continual procession of people coming and going, or kept back the too curious crowd with their large scimetars. Passing by, the devout Mussulman murmured a prayer for his sublime Lord; the poor but ambitious youth dreamed of the day when he too should cross that threshold to receive the horse-tail standard; (the sign of a Pashà's rank) the pretty, ragged girl fancied herself a splendid odalisque; the relations of the victims cast down their eyes and trembled; and a serene silence reigned all over the place, broken three times a day by the voice of the muezzin.

By the gate Umaium, one entered the so-called court of the janissaries, the first enclosure of the Seraglio. This great court is still in existence, surrounded by irregular buildings, very long, and shaded by groups of large trees, among which is that enormous plane tree known as the tree of the janissaries, whose trunk it takes ten men to embrace. On the left is the church of St. Irene, founded by Constantine, and converted by the Turks into

an armory. Beyond and all around once stood the hospital of the Seraglio, the public Treasury, the imperial stables, the kitchens, the barracks of the *capigi*, the mint, and the houses of high officers of the court. Under the great plane tree there are still two small stone columns on which decapitations took place. By this court passed all those who were going to the Divan, or to have audience of the Sultan. One hundred and fifty bakers and two hundred cooks and scullions worked in the kitchens and prepared food for that monstrous family, "who ate the bread and salt of the Grand Signor." Long caravans of mules and camels came in bearing provisions for the table, or arms from defeated armies to the church of St. Irene, where near the sabre of Mahomet, sparkled the scimetar of Scanderbeg, and the armlets of Tamerlane. The tax-gatherers came, followed by slaves laden with gold for the Treasury, where there were riches enough, as the Grand Vizier of Solomon said, to build fleets with silver anchors and silken cordage. Here too passed the nine hundred horses of Murad Fourth, that fed out of silver mangers, led by splendid Bulgarian grooms. From morning till night there was a glitter of magnificent uniforms, amid which shone out the high white turbans of the janissaries, and the tall heron plumes of the *solaks*, while the silver helmets of the *peiks*, the Sultan's guards, dressed in golden tunics bound at the waist with jewelled girdles; the *zuluflù-baltagi*, in the service of the officers of the household, with long woolly tresses pendant from their caps; the *kassekì*, with their emblematical staves in hand; servants of the Grand Vizier with their whips ornamented with silver chains; and a mingled crowd of archers, lancers, "valiant guards," and "*guardie temerarie*," black

eunuchs and white eunuchs, and haughty gentlemen belonging to the court, came and went at all hours of the day.

But the disorder was only in appearance; for the movements of all were regulated with the utmost precision. At dawn the thirty-two muezzins, chosen for their sweet voices, announced the day from the minarets of the Seraglio mosques; meeting as they came in the astronomers and astrologers who had passed the night upon the terraces studying the propitious hours for the Sultan's occupations. Then came the first physician to ask about the health of the Padishah; the ulema arrived whose duty it was to give religious instruction to his illustrious disciple; the private secretary, to read to him the petitions received the evening before; the professors of arts and sciences passed, going to the third court to give lessons to the imperial pages. Each at a fixed hour, all the personages who held office under the Sultan came to receive orders for the day. The general of the Imperial guard, and governor of the Seraglio and all the Sultan's villas scattered along the shores of the Bosphorus, came to ask if it pleased the Grand Signor to take an airing on the sea, because if so, it was he whose duty it was to steer while his *bostangis* had the honor of rowing. The grand master of the hunt, the grand falconer, and others of lesser rank came to know their master's wishes, whether he would fly white falcon or black, vulture or sparrow-hawk; these, with many more, all distinguished by their special costume and color. No confusion was possible in that endless procession. The mufti was in white; the vizier was recognized by his pale green dress, the chamberlain by his gown of scarlet; dark blue distinguished the six first legislative officials; the grand ulema

or high priest wore violet; the sheiks light blue; dark green was the privilege of the agà of the imperial staff and the bearer of the sacred standard; the officers of the stables wore light green; the generals of the army had red boots, the officers of the Porte, yellow, the *ulemas* blue; and the depth and humility of the salutations corresponded to the scale of colors. The chief of police and commander of an army of jailors and executioners passed between two ranks of bowed heads; before the Grand Eunuch, Marshal of the Court, helmets, turbans, and plumes went down as before a mighty wind. All those whose duties brought them near the person of the Sultan received special demonstrations of respect and curiosity. The court preacher, and the grand master of the wardrobe, who threw coins to the people on imperial birthdays, passed amid a respectful murmur, and a thousand curious eyes followed the fortunate Mussulman whose duty it was to shave the imperial head once in every ten days. The chief cook received much adulation, and ceremonious smiles greeted the guardian of the parrots and nightingales, whose service brought him into the more secret corners of the palace. Twice a day a hundred scullions issued from the kitchen, bringing enormous pyramids of rice, and sheep roasted whole, which were placed under the shade of the trees and arcades, and a crowd of guards and servants converted the court into a military banqueting hall. Later the scene changed, and foreign ambassadors arrived "*between two walls of silk and gold.*" Then, as Soliman the Great wrote to the Shah of Persia, "the entire universe flowed by." Envoys from Charles the Fifth and Francis the First came side by side with ambassadors from Hungary, Servia, and Poland, and the repub-

lics of Genoa and Venice. These and thousands more of every rank and condition passed by, with slow, composed step, silent, or speaking under the breath in correct and circumspect language proper to the place; and there was an exchange of grave and scrutinizing looks, a touching with the hand of forehead and breast, a discreet murmur of low words, and a rustle of garments and slippers, which gave something grave and monkish to the aspect of that motley crowd, contrasting boldly with the warlike fierceness of their faces, the pomp and splendor of their dress and arms. In all eyes one thought could be read, on all foreheads lay the burden of terror; terror of one man, before whom great and small alike were but as the dust of the earth.

From this first court you entered the second by the great Bab-el-selam, or gate of Health, which still stands intact between two towers, and here no one passes even now without a firman. Formerly it was enclosed by two great folding doors in front and other two within, making when they were closed a large dark chamber, where a man could be secretly despatched. Below it were the cells of the executioners, which communicated with the Divan by a dark passage. There high personages who had fallen into disgrace went to receive sentence, which was often followed by instant execution. In those days, governors and disgraced viziers were called to the Seraglio on some pretext; they passed, unsuspicious, under the gloomy archway, and entered the Divan, where they were received with a benevolent smile, or a mild severity that seemed to threaten only distant castigation. Dismissed, they returned the way they came, and were never more seen alive. If a dying cry

was heard in the court, a few people turned that way for a moment and then resumed their avocations. There is still under the archway to the right the little iron door of the prison into which the victim was thrown when he was not to be done to death at once, either to prolong his agony, or to be sent into exile.

The inner court which is entered by the Bab-el-selam, is a vast irregular space, a measureless hall with the sky for a ceiling, surrounded by graceful buildings and gilded domes, dotted with groups of beautiful trees, and crossed by two alleys of gigantic cypresses. Around the whole runs a light arcade, supported by slender marble columns, and with a projecting roof covered with lead. To the left on entering was the hall of the Divan, surmounted by a glittering dome ; further on the hall of reception, its six enormous marble columns sustaining a roof with undulating edges ; the whole, columns, walls, and roof carved, painted, and gilded with such light and delicate workmanship that it resembled a pavilion of lace set with jewels ; and shaded by a group of superb plane trees. On the other side were various halls and magazines, kitchens and so forth. In these last were prepared the meals for the viziers on the days when a divan was held, and, on the occasions of circumcisions and royal marriages, the famous dishes of sweet pastry, camels and giraffes in sugar, and sheep roasted whole, from which flocks of birds came out, which were borne in great pomp into the square of the Hippodrome.

Of all the buildings that surround this court, I saw only the hall of the Divan, which is almost exactly as it was when it was used for the sittings of the Council of State. It is a large hall

with a vaulted ceiling, lighted from above by small moresque windows, and lined with marble arabesqued with gold, with no furniture beyond the Divan upon which sat the members of the council. Above the seat of the Grand Vizier there is still the small, gold-latticed window where Soliman the Great and all the Sultans after him, assisted or were supposed to assist, unseen, at the sittings of the council; a secret passage led from this small hidden chamber to the imperial apartments on the third court. Five times a week the council of ministers sat, the Grand Vizier presiding. He sat opposite the door of entrance; near him the Capidan-Pashà-grand admiral; the two judges of Anatolia and Rumelia, representing the magistracy of the provinces of Asia and Europe; on one side the imperial Treasurers; on the other the *Nisciandgi*, or officers who affixed the Sultan's seal to the decrees; beyond, to the right and left two rows of ulemas and chamberlains, and at the corners the bearers of orders and executioners of punishment, trained to comprehend every look or sign.

It was a spectacle before which the boldest trembled, and the most innocent fearfully questioned their conscience. A pale light descending from above fell upon the white turbans, the grave faces, the long beards and rich dresses of the magnates. Their voices sounded one after the other, tranquil and monotonous as the murmur of a stream, while the accused, standing in the middle of the hall, knew not which mouth was speaking. Every look was studied, every word weighed, every thought divined; and sentence of death came forth in quiet, low voiced words, after long consultation in the midst of a sepulchral silence. But these haughty and impassive judges were

startled in their turn, when Murad the Fourth, or the Second Selim shook with furious hand the gilded lattice of the secret chamber! Then, after long silence and hurried consultation by the eyes, they resumed their sitting with impassible faces and solemn voices, but ice cold hands were trembling under their long sleeves, and they recommended their souls to God.

At the bottom of the second court, which might be called the diplomatic court of the Seraglio, opened a third great door with marble columns and projecting portico, before which a company of white eunuchs and one of *capigi* kept guard night and day, armed with sabre and dagger.

This was the famous Bab-Seadet, or Gate of Felicity, which led to the third court; the sacred door that remained closed for four centuries to any Christian who did not present himself in the name of a king or a people; the mysterious portal from which issued and spread themselves about the world so many legends of sorrow and of pleasure, so many images of beauty, so many revelations of secrets of love or blood, and an infinite quantity of voluptuous and terrible poetry; the solemn entrance into the sanctuary of the king of kings, which the people regarded with a secret sense of terror, like the gate of some enchanted place, entering which the profane creature must remain petrified, seeing things that human language could not describe. Even now the traveller of the coldest imagination hesitates before this door and sees with amazement the shadow of his cylindrical head-gear thrown upon its half-closed portals.

And yet upon this very gate the tide of military rebellion rose and beat. It may even be said that this corner of the great court, between the hall of the Divan and the Seadet gate,

is the point where the fury of the rebels was boldest and most sanguinary. The Grand Signor governed with the sword, and the sword dictated the law to him. The despotism which forbade access to the Seraglio was the same that violated its penetralia. Then was seen on what a fragile pedestal the menacing colossus stood! Hordes of armed janissaries and spahis bearing torches, beat down in the middle of the night the first and second gates, and burst in, waving on the points of their scimetars the petitions demanding the heads of the obnoxious viziers, and their shouts resounded in the sacred precincts of their sovereign, where all was terror and confusion. In vain were bags of gold and silver coin thrown down among them from the walls; in vain sheiks, muftis, ulemas, and grandees of the court besought them with courteous and supplicating words; in vain the pale women within showed themselves with their little children at the grated windows. The thousand-headed monster, unchained and blind with fury, demanded his prey. The Sultan, surrounded by his eunuchs and frightened pages, appeared behind the barricades of the door, and besought grace and pardon for the condemned in the name of their mothers, of the Prophet, of the glory of the Empire, of the peace of the world. A yell of insult and of menace and a wild waving of torches and scimetars were the only response. And then, one by one, from the gate of Felicity staggered the victims, the treasurers, the viziers, the eunuchs, the favorites, the generals, and falling among those wild beasts thirsting for their blood, were despatched and trodden under foot. So Murad the Third threw out Mehemet, his favorite falconer, and saw him torn to pieces; so Mahomet the Third sacrificed the Kis-

lar-agà Othman, and the white eunuch Ghaznefer, and was constrained to salute the soldiers in presence of the bloody corpses; so Murad the Fourth with sobs drove out Hafiz, his grand vizier, stabbed to death by seventeen poniards; and so Selim the Third gave over to death the whole of his Divan; and while the Padishàh turned back into his apartment, cursing, and torn with rage and grief, the rebels were dragging the corpses in triumph and by torch-light about the streets of Stamboul.

The first edifice that one encounters on entering the Felicity gate is the hall of the Throne, which it is permitted to visit. It is a small square building, round which runs a beautiful marble gallery, with a rich doorway, flanked by two fountains. The hall is covered by a vaulted ceiling decorated with arabesque in gold, the walls are decorated by marble and porcelain tiles forming symmetrical figures, and in the middle there is a marble basin for a fountain. Tall windows of stained glass light the hall, and at one end is the throne, in the form of a large bed, covered by a canopy fringed with pearls, and supported by four tall, slender columns of gilded copper. These columns are ornamented with arabesques and set with precious stones, and are surmounted by four golden globes bearing crescents, from which depend four horse-tails, emblems of the military power of the Padishàh. I thought as I entered, of the nineteen brothers of Mahomet the Third. They had received sentence of death in their prison, as the cannon announced to Europe and Asia the death of their father. The mutes of the Seraglio piled the nineteen corpses in front of the throne.

They were of all ages, from infancy to maturity, the blonde

baby head resting upon the breast of the man, grey locks mingling with gold, red prison caftans beside cradle wrappings. These bright marbles and glittering arabesques have seen strange sights in their day, here when burst out the formidable anger of Selim the Second, of Ahmed First, of Murad Fourth and Ibrahim, exulting spectacles of despairing agonies!

Coming out from the pavilion of the throne, you pass through various gardens and courts surrounded by small buildings with marble colonades and Moorish arches. Here the imperial pages resided, and the education fitting them to fill high offices of state was carried on by learned and competent men. One of the graceful Saracenic kiosks, with open peristyle which formerly existed here and held the library, still remains. It is chiefly admirable for its fine bronze door, decorated with reliefs in jasper and lapis-lazuli, of intricate design and exquisite workmanship. The Imperial treasury stood here, holding the immense riches, composed for the greater part of arms taken from conquered armies, or given or bequeathed by the Sultans themselves. Mahmoud the Second, who was an accomplished penman, and proud of the fact, left his golden inkstand encrusted with diamonds to the treasury. Now the greater part of this treasure has passed into the exchequer in the shape of gold coin.

Not far from the pavilion of the treasury, in a solitary garden, still stands that famous *bird cage* in which in the time of Mahomet the Fourth and after, those princes of the blood who gave umbrage to the Padishàh, were shut up; and there remained until a rebellion of janissaries should call them to the throne, or the executioner should bow-string them. It is a

building in the form of a temple, windowless, with thick walls, lighted from above, and having one small iror. door strongly barred, against which a great stone was placed. Here Abdul-Aziz was shut up during the few days that passed between his fall from the throne and his death. Here Ibrahim, the Ottoman Caligula, made his miserable end, and his image is the first that rises before the visitor on the threshold of that necropolis of the living.

The military agas had pulled him down from his throne and dragged him to prison. Here he was incarcerated with two of his favorite women. After the first fury of despair, he became resigned. "This," he said, "was written upon my forehead; it was God's command." Of all his empire, there remained to him only this prison, two slaves, and the Koran; but he thought himself secure of life, and lived tranquilly, consoled by a ray of hope that his partisans of the barrack and the tavern would some day rise and come to his aid. But he had forgotten that sentence of the Koran which says:—"When there are two califs—kill one!"—and the muftis remembered it. His last day was passed seated on a mat in a corner of his prison, reading the Koran to his two slaves, who stood with arms crossed on their breasts before him. Dressed in a black caftan, confined at the waist by a ragged shawl, and with a red woollen cap on his head, his face, though pale, was resigned and calm. Suddenly a low sound made him spring to his feet, and at the open door a group of sinister figures confronted him. He understood, and raised his eyes to a latticed gallery that projected high up on the wall, where through the gratings he could see the cold impassible faces of the muftis and viziers

looking down. Terror took possession of him, and a flood of supplicating words poured from his lips:—"Have pity on me! Have pity on the Padishâh! Give me my life! If there is one among you who has eaten my bread, let him help me in the name of God! Thou, mufti Abdul-Zahim, take care what thou doest! I could have killed thee for a traitor, and I spared thee, and now thou strikest at my life!"—The executioner, trembling, raised his eyes to the grated gallery; but a hard voice issued thence, and said:—"Kari-Ali, do thy duty." The officer placed his hand on Ibrahim's shoulder, but Ibrahim, with a cry, fled into a corner and took refuge behind the two women. Then Kari-Ali and the rest fell upon him, casting the slaves aside, and in a moment a small silken cord had launched into eternity the nineteenth Sultan of the dynasty of Osman.

Other edifices, besides those described and those of the harem, were scattered here and there among the groves and gardens. There were the baths of Selim the Second, comprehending thirty-two vast halls, resplendent in marble, gold, and colors; there were kiosks round and octagon, with roofs of every shape, at whose windows of stained glass hung gilded cages full of parrots and nightingales, where the Sultan went to hear the "Thousand and One Nights" read by aged dervishes; and a host of others for all uses and pleasures. Finally, in the more secret quarters of the harem was the temple of relics, or "*chamber of noble garments*" imitated from the gilded halls of the Byzantine Emperors and closed by a door of silver; in which was preserved the mantle of the Prophet, solemnly displayed once a year in the presence of the assembled court,

his staff; his bow enclosed in a silver case; the relics of the Kaaba, and the sacred and venerated holy war standard, wrapped in forty silken coverings, the sight of which would strike blind as by lightning the infidel who should dare to fix his eyes upon it. Everything that was most sacred and precious to the race and empire was gathered there in that discreet and shaded spot, towards which, from all parts of the metropolis, seemed to converge a prostrate and adoring crowd of worshippers.

In one angle of this retired spot, to the left on entering, under the shadow of the most luxuriant trees, amid the murmur of fountains and the song of birds, rose the harem, which was like a separate quarter of the Imperial city, and was composed of many small white buildings with leaden domes, shaded by orange trees and umbrella pines, separated by small gardens with walls covered with ivy and honeysuckle, and paths laid down in a bright mosaic of shells and pebbles; the whole enclosed, divided and subdivided; the balconies covered in, the windows grated and further protected by rose-colored blinds, and colored glass, the doors barred with iron, the paths without any issue, and on all a freshness and shaded coolness, an air of mystery and peace conducive to revery. Here lived and loved and was continually renewed the great family of the Seraglio. It was like an immense monastery, whose religion was pleasure, and whose God the Sultan. There were the Imperial apartments in which resided the four first wives of the Grand Signor, each one of whom had her kiosk, her own little court, her grand officials, her boats lined with satin, her gilded carriages, her eunuchs, her slaves, and her "*slipper* money," which was the revenue of a province. The Sultana mother lived here

with all her innumerable following, and all the aunts, sisters, sons, and nephews of the Padishàh, forming a court within a court, with a host of baby princes.

What memories among these groves and gardens! what visions of the lovely daughters of the Caucasus and the Archipelago, the mountains, the desert, and the sea, Mussulman, Nazarene, idolaters, won in battle by the Pashàs, presented by princes, stolen by corsairs, pass like shadows under those silvery domes! These are the walls which beheld the first Ibrahim, his head crowned with flowers, and his beard sparkling with gems, holding high festival among his slaves; here dwelt the third Murad, father of a hundred sons; and here Murad the Fourth sank into infamous decrepitude at thirty years of age.

Let us try to imagine what life was like in that place on a beautiful April day, under the reign of Soliman the Great. The sky is serene, the air full of spring perfumes, the gardens gay with flowers. In the labyrinth of paths still wet with dew, lounge black eunuchs in splendid attire, and slaves, clothed in striped stuffs of vivid colors, pass and repass carrying baskets and vessels covered with green veils between the kitchens and kiosks. Under the shadow of the trees the Sultan's buffoons, and dwarfs in harlequin habits with turbans of grotesque proportions, are romping together. Near by, behind a hedge, a gigantic eunuch, by an imperceptible sign of finger, gives orders to five mutes, executioners of punishment, to go to the Kislar-agà, who requires their services for a secret matter. Youths of an ambiguous style of beauty, and dressed richly in a semi-feminine fashion, are chasing each other about under the plane

trees. In another part a group of slave women stop and divide, bowing on either side as the Kiaya, or governess of the harem, passes by, returning their salutation by a sign from her staff of office, a small silver *baton* with the imperial seal on one end. The door of a neighboring kiosk opens and a *cadina* (wife of the Sultan) comes forth, dressed in pale blue, and wrapped in a thick white veil, followed by her slave women. She is going, by permission of the governess, to play ball with another *cadina* in an alley of the garden, and meeting one of the Sultan's sisters with her children and slaves, the two ladies exchange a languid salutation. In front of another kiosk, a eunuch awaits the sign which is to permit the entrance of a Jewess who has jewels to sell; and who after much intriguing has succeeded in obtaining the right of entry into the imperial harem, where she will carry other things besides jewels, in the shape of messages from ambitious Pashàs and audacious lovers. At the other extremity of the harem the *hanum*, whose duty it is to visit the newly arrived slaves, is seeking the governess to inform her that the young Abyssinian just arrived, is in her judgment worthy to be received among the *gheduclù*,* although she *has* a small excrescence on her left shoulder.

Meantime in a green spot surrounded by hedges the twenty nurses of the princes born during the year are gathered with their charges, while a number of female slaves play on guitars and flutes, and a crowd of children dressed in blue and crimson dance merrily to the music, the Sultana Validé throwing bonbons to them from her window.

The treasuress of the harem arrives, followed by three

* The Sultan's favorite women.

slaves, with some important news written on their faces; the imperial ships that have been sent to meet the Genoese and Venetian galleys have crossed them twenty miles from the port of Sira and have taken possession of all the silks and velvets of the cargo for the harem of the Padishah. There is a continual opening and shutting of doors, and rising and dropping of curtains by which messengers on all sorts of affairs are coming and going, and everywhere curious lookers-on behind the lattices, mute salutations exchanged between terraces and gardens, furtive signs behind the curtains, laughter loud and low, and rapid flight of feminine drapery along the cloistered walls.

But it was not only intrigue and puerilities that went on within those temples and gardens. Politics entered there by every door and every grated window, and the power exercised by bright eyes over affairs of state was not less there than in the kingdoms of the west; the secluded and monotonous life increasing the intensity of jealousies and ambitions. Those jewelled heads in their perfumed prison agitated alike court, divan, and the entire Seraglio. The eunuchs served as means of communication with muftis, viziers, and agas of the janissaries. They were aware of everything that went on in the empire and the metropolis, they knew the dangers that threatened them, they learned to know the statesmen whom they had to fear, or in whom they might hope, and they patiently organized mysterious plots that pulled down their enemies, and elevated their protectors. All the different parties of the court and empire had a root, many roots there, in the hearts of the Validé Sultanas, the sisters of the Sultan, his wives, and his odalisques. There were questions and discussions without and about the education of

children, the marriage of daughters, precedence at feasts, the succession of the young princes to the throne, about peace and about war. The caprices of the ladies of the harem sent thirty thousand janissaries and forty thousand spahis to cover with corpses the shores of the Danube, and fleets of a hundred ships to stain with blood the Black Sea and the Archipelago. The princes of Europe sent secret letters to them, to ensure a good result for their negotiations. From their white hands issued the decrees that gave the government of provinces and the high grades of the army. It is the caresses of Roxalana that tighten the bow-string at the necks of the Grand Viziers Ahmed and Ibrahim; it is the kisses of Saffié, the beautiful Venetian, "*pearl and shell of the Caliphat*," which maintain for so many years amicable relations between the Porte and the Venetian republic. The seven wives (*cadine*) of Murad Third, governed the empire for the last twenty years of the sixteenth century. The beautiful Makpicker, *the moon formed*, the *cadina* of the two thousand seven hundred shawls, reigned over the two seas and two worlds from Ahmed First to the Fourth Mahomet. Rebia Gulnuz, the odalisque of the hundred silver carriages, directed the imperial divans in the first ten years of the second half of the seventeenth century, and Scekerbuli, *the little bit of sugar*, made the sanguinary Ibrahim travel up and down for her pleasure between Stamboul and Adrianople.

Fearful nights of terror and despair, came also for the little Babylon hidden among the flowers. Rebellion had no more respect for the third enclosure than it had for the first and second. The soldiery broke in at the Felicity gate, and invaded the harem In vain the eunuchs defended with their daggers

the sacred thresholds. The janissaries climbed upon the roofs, broke through the cupolas, and precipitating themselves into the rooms. tore the princes from their mothers' arms. The Validé Sultanas were dragged by the feet, out of their hiding places, defending themselves with tooth and nail, and being thrown backwards over the knees of the *baltagi*, were strangled with the curtain cords. The younger, rushing back into their apartments, gave despairing shrieks at the sight of the empty cradles, and the trembling slaves maintained an awful silence, which meant:—"Go and seek your children at the foot of the throne." Dismayed eunuchs came to announce to the favorites, weakened by a distant tumult, that their heads were demanded, and that they must prepare to die. The three wives of the Third Selim, condemned to the sack and cord, heard in the night each other's mortal shrieks, and died under the hands of mutes. Horrible jealousies and horrid vengeance made the kiosks resound with groans and cries that spread alarm throughout the harem. The Circassian mother of Mustapha tore Roxalana's face with her nails, the rival favorites slapped Scekerbulì, the Sultana Tarchan saw the dagger of Mahomet Fourth flash above the heads of her little ones, the wife of Ahmed First with her own hands choked her rival, and was herself poniarded in the face, and struck down under the feet of the Padishàh; and who knows how many crimes remain forever unknown! Their veils smother their cries, flowers hide the blood, two shadows flit through the dark alleys of the garden bearing a dark burden between them; the sentinels upon the towers hear a splash in the water, and one of the thousand chambers of the smiling and luxurious harem is empty.

All these images came to my mind as I wandered through the enclosure and raised my eyes to the grated windows of the desolate kiosks, sad as tombs. And, in the midst of these sinister memories, I was aware of a kind of pleasant trepidation, as if at any moment some one of those beautiful and famous women might appear before me, flitting through the garden alley, or glancing from the latticed window. I felt an impulse to speak aloud those memorable names, listening for some faint and distant response, or beholding a white veiled form dimly in the deserted grove of trees. I would have given something to know where had been the apartment of the widow of Alexis Comnenus, the loveliest Greek woman of her time, and where the daughter of Erizzo, Governor of Negropont, had been stabbed to death for refusing the caresses of Mahomet the Second, and where Currem, the favorite of Soliman, had stood, when looking from her window at the Sea of Marmora with her wonderful black eyes, veiled by long silken fringes. Here in this path had the lovely Hungarian dancer, who stole from Saffié the heart of Murad Third, left no trace of her light feet? And from this flower bed had Kesem, the beautiful and fierce Greek, with pallid and melancholy visage, never culled a blossom? The gigantic Armenian woman who drove Ibrahim frantic with love, had she never dipped her great white arm in this fountain? Was there nothing of them left, not a tress of hair, not a shred of a veil, not a mark upon the wall? My fancies ended in a painful and terrible vision. I saw them pass in interminable procession, far off, among the trees and under the long colonades, one behind the other, Sultanas, wives and sisters, *cadine*, odalisques, slaves, budding girls and blooming matrons, old

white-haired women, timid virginal faces, and faces fierce and terrible with jealous rage, Imperial ladies, favorites of an hour, with their strangled infants in their arms or led by the hand; one with a bowstring at his neck, another with a dagger in his heart, a third dripping from the sea; splendid with gems, or covered with wounds and blood; mute and frail phantoms, they passed and were lost in the darkness of the shaded alleys, leaving behind them a trace of trodden flowers and drops of tears and blood; and my soul was filled with a great compassion.

Beyond the third enclosure extends a flat piece of ground, covered with a luxuriant vegetation, and dotted with small edifices, among which rises the so-called column of Theodosius, in grey granite, surmounted by a handsome Corinthian capital, and with a large pedestal on which can be read the final words of a Latin inscription:—"*Fortunæ reduci ob devictus Gothos.*" And here ends the high plain on which the great central rectangle of the Seraglio buildings stands. From this to Seraglio Point descends a series of luxuriant terraced gardens, full of rare trees and flowering plants of every kind, with flights of marble steps leading to the sea.

Along the wall opposite to Scutari was the new palace of Sultan Mahmoud, which had one great door of gilded copper opening on the sea. Near Seraglio Point was the summer harem, a vast semicircular building capable of accommodating five hundred women, with vast courts and splendid baths, and gardens where those feasts known as the "Feasts of Tulips" were celebrated. In front of this harem, outside the wall on the shore, was the famous Seraglio battery, composed of twenty cannon of strange forms, and much carved and ornamented,

taken from the Christian armies in the first European wars. The walls had eight gates, three on the city side, and five towards the sea. Great marble terraces projected from the walls over the sea. Subterranean roads led to the sea gates, so that the Sultan could escape secretly in case of assault, and reach Scutari or Top-hané. There were, besides, a host of kiosks and buildings of various sorts on the flanks of the hill and near the external walls. There near the summit harem stood the kiosk of the mirrors, where the treaty of peace of 1784 was signed, by which Turkey ceded the Crimea to Russia. The kiosk of the cannon, from whose windows corpses were cast into the sea, stood near the battery. The kiosk of the sea, where the Sultana Validé of Mahomet Fourth held her secret divans, hung over the mingled currents of the Bosphorus and the Sea of Marmora. At that angle of the wall nearest to Saint Sophia was the kiosk of Alai, from which Mahomet Fourth threw his favorite wife Meleki to the rebellious army, and twenty-nine court officials besides, who were torn to pieces under his eyes.

The night is half spent; the sea reflects the sky burning with stars; the moon silvers the hundred domes of the Seraglio and whitens the tops of cypresses and plane trees, and the innumerable lighted windows one by one are darkened. The imperial city sleeps. . . .

And so for thirty years it has slept, abandoned on its solitary hill; and the verses of the Persian poet that were on the lips of Mahomet the Conqueror when he first placed his foot within those desecrated halls, might be again repeated:—"The unclean spider weaves her web in the halls of kings, and from the proud peaks of Erasciab, the raven croaks his fatal chant."

LAST DAYS.

At this point the chain of my minute and lucid reminiscences is broken, and I can no longer describe at length; I remember nothing but a series of hurried expeditions from one shore to the other, after which, in the evening, there passed before my mind as in a dream, the illuminated city, immense throngs of people, groves, fleets, hills, and the thought of my approaching departure gave to everything a slight coloring of sadness, as if those visions were already only memories of distant countries.

And yet some images remain immovable in the midst of the mist of people and things that ever rises before me when I think of those days.

I recall the lovely morning when I visited the greater part of the imperial mosques, and again I seem to see around me an immensity of silent space. The image of Saint Sophia in no way lessens the wonder excited by the first entrance within those titanic walls. There, as elsewhere, the religion of the conquerors has appropriated the religious art of the conquered. Almost all the mosques are imitated from the Basilica of Justinian; they have the great dome, the half domes beneath, the courts and porticoes; some even have the form of a Greek cross. But Islamism has spread over everything its own color and light, so that the mass presents the appearance of a new

edifice, in which are seen the horizons of an unknown world, and the presence of another God is felt. They are enormous naves of austere and grand simplicity, all white, and with many windows, that diffuse an equal and soft light, in which the eye discerns every object from one extremity to the other, and reposes, with the thought, in a soft, sleepy tranquillity, like that of a snowy valley covered by a white sky. You hear the sonorous echo of your own footsteps and know by that alone that you are in an enclosed place. There is nothing to distract the mind, which darts at once across that white space to the object of adoration. There is no argument either for melancholy or terror; there are neither illusions, nor mysteries, nor obscure corners, in which shine vaguely the images of a complicated hierarchy of superhuman beings that confound the senses; there is nothing but the clear, perfect, and formidable idea of one solitary God, who loves the severe nudity of the desert inundated with light, and admits no other image of himself than the heavens. All the imperial mosques of Constantinople present the same aspect of naked grandeur and simplicity, so that it is difficult in recalling them to distinguish one from the other. The mosque of Ahmed, enormous, but also light and graceful without as an aerial edifice, has its dome upheld by four measureless round pilasters of white marble, and is the only one in Stamboul that has six minarets. The mosque of Soliman, which is a sacred city more than a temple, in which the stranger loses himself, is formed of three naves, and its dome, higher than that of Saint Sophia, rests on four wonderful columns of rose granite that remind one of the trunks of the famous gigantic trees of California. The mosque of Mahomet

is another Saint Sophia, white and cheerful; that of Bajazet is the most elegant in form; that of Osman is all of marble; and that of Shah Zadé has the most graceful minarets. Each has its own peculiar beauty, or legend, or privilege. Sultan Ahmed has the custody of the Standard of the Prophet; Solimanié boasts the inscription of Karà-hissari; Validé Sultan has the false golden column that cost the life of the conqueror of Candia; Sultan Mehemet sees "eleven imperial mosques bow their heads around him, as around Joseph's sheaf bowed the sheaves of his brothers." In one are the columns of the Palace of Justinian, and those that bore the statues of Venus, Theodora, and Eudosia; in others are found the marbles of the ancient churches of Calcedonia, columns from the ruins of Troy, and from Egyptian temples, remains of circus and forum, aqueduct and basilica; all confused and lost in the immense whiteness of the mosques of Islam.

Within, the differences are slighter than in the exterior. At the end there is a marble pulpit; opposite to it the Sultan's balcony, latticed and gilded; beside the Mihrab two enormous candelabra sustaining torches tall as palm trees; and all about the nave innumerable lights with glass globes, disposed irregularly, and looking more like preparations for a ball, than for religious solemnity. The sacred inscriptions that run round the pilasters, the doors, and the windows of the domes, and a sort of imitation frieze painted to represent marble, are the only ornaments that stand out upon the naked whiteness of those monumental walls. Treasures of marble are in the pavements of the vestibules, porticoes, fountains, and minarets; but they in no way alter the austere and sober, though graceful charac-

ter of the edifice, white, set in verdure, and crowned by domes glittering against the azure of the sky. The mosque occupies only a part of the enclosure, which embraces a labyrinth of courts and houses. There are auditoriums for the reading of the Koran, places of deposit for the safe keeping of private property, libraries and academies, schools of medicine and schools for children, kitchens for the poor, infirmaries, refuges for travellers, baths; a small town, hospitable and beneficent, gathered around the lofty mole of the temple, as at the foot of a mountain, and all shaded by great trees. But all these objects are but dim in my memory; and I see nothing but the small black point made by my own person, lost, like an atom, in those enormous buildings, in the midst of long files of tiny prostrate Turks at their prayers.

The reminiscences of another day are all dark, and full of mystery and phantasms. I entered the court of a Mussulman house, descended by the light of a torch a steep and damp staircase, and found myself under the vault of Kere-batan Serai, the great *cistern-basilica* of Constantine, of which the vulgar believe that the real extent has never been known. The greenish waters lose themselves under the black arches, touched here and there by a livid ray of light that adds to the horror of the darkness. The torch threw a red gleam upon the arches near the door, and revealed dimly the dripping walls and the confused groups of columns everywhere, like trunks of trees in a thick forest. The fancy loses itself among those sepulchral porticoes, hovering above the gloomy waters, while the dragoman in a low voice tells the terrible tale of those who have ventured to explore those subterranean solitudes in a boat, hoping to

discover the extent of them, and how, after many hours, they return desperately rowing, with hair on end, and faces transfigured with horror, while the distant vaults echo with loud laughter and demoniac noises; and of others who never came back, but ended, no one knows how, driven mad perhaps with terror, or dead of hunger, or drawn into some unknown abyss by the mysterious current, far from Stamboul, God alone knows where. This lugubrious vision vanished suddenly in the broad light of the square of the Et-Meidan, and a few minutes after I was again underground among the two hundred pillars of the dry cistern, called Bin-birdirck, where many Greek workmen are weaving silk, lighted by some pallid rays that filter down through the arches, and all singing in shrill voices, a warlike ditty. Above my head I could hear the confused noise of a caravan passing. Then once more the sunshine and the open air, and again a descent into the bowels of the earth, more darkness and columns and the faint sound of distant voices, and so on until evening, a mysterious and pensive pilgrimage, after which there remained before the eyes of my imagination a vast subterranean lake, in which had sunk and vanished the metropolis of the empire of the Greeks, and where Stamboul, smiling and careless, would one day disappear in her turn.

The darkness gives place to the splendid image of Scutari. Scutari delighted me with her sudden changes of aspect as you approach in a steamboat. From the Sea of Marmora she looks like a big village spreading over a hill; but seen from the Golden Horn, she shows herself a city. As the steamboat rounds the point of the Asiatic shore, Scutari seems to rise and grow before you; the hills crowned with buildings appear one

behind the other ; suburbs are seen in the valleys, villas smile on the heights ; the enormous city has a theatrical air of pomp and reveals herself as if by the rising of a curtain. Another day we took the *tramway*, and, seated between two tall black eunuchs who had been detailed for our service, went to see the palace of Ceragan, planted on the shore of the Bosphorus. I remember the indefinable sentiment of curiosity and repulsion that possessed me, as I looked out of the corner of my eye at the eunuch next to me, who towered above me by a whole head, and held his immense hands spread out upon his knees ; exhaling all the time a powerful perfume of bergamot from his courtier-like apparel. When we stopped, and I put my hand in my pocket to get my *portemonnaie*, one of those monstrous hands seized me by the arm like an iron pincers, and his great black eyes looked into mine, as if to say :—" Christian, do not affront me, or I will dislocate your bones !" We came to a small arabesqued door, went through a long corridor, where a number of servants in livery came to meet us, and exchanging our boots for slippers, ascended a grand staircase that led to a royal hall. There was no need to evoke the memories of the past, for the air was yet warm with the presence of the court. The broad divans covered with velvet and silk, that ran along the walls, were the same where only a few days before the ladies of the harem had been seated. A vague perfume of that soft and luxurious existence still pervaded the place. We passed through numerous rooms, decorated in a mixed European and Moorish style, and with a certain superb simplicity that made one lower one's voice. The eunuchs muttering some incomprehensible explanation, pointed out doors and corners, with ges-

tures which seemed to indicate some mystery. Nothing however of all the splendor remains in my memory except the Sultan's baths, made of whitest marble, sculptured with pendent flowers and stalactites, and decorated with fringes and delicate embroideries, that one feared to touch, so fragile did they seem. The disposition of the rooms reminded me vaguely of the Alhambra. Our steps made no sound upon the rich carpets spread everywhere. Now and then, a eunuch pulled a cord, and a green curtain rose and displayed the Bosphorus, Asia, a thousand ships, a great light; and then all vanished again, as in a flash of lightning. The rooms seemed endless, and as each door appeared we hastened our steps, but a profound silence reigned in every part, and there was no vestige of any living being, nor no rustle of garment, save the sound made by the silken door curtains as they fell behind. At last we were weary of that endless journey from one splendid empty room to another, seeing ourselves reflected in great mirrors, with the black faces of our guides, and the group of silent servants, and were thankful to find ourselves again in the free air, in the midst of the ragged, noisy denizens of Top-hané.

The necropolis of Eyub is not to be forgotten. We went there one evening at sunset, and it remains in my memory as I then saw it, illuminated by the last rays of the sun. A caique brought us to the end of the Golden Horn and we ascended to the "Holy land" of the Osmanlè by a steep path bordered with tombs. At that hour the place was deserted. We went onward with circumspection, looking about us for the severe visage of an imaum or a dervish, because the profane curiosity of a *giaour* is not tolerated in that place. But we saw neither conical hat

nor turban. With some trepidation we arrived at that mysterious mosque of Eyub, which we had so often seen from the hills of the opposite shore, with its light and glittering minarets. In the court, shaded by a great plane tree, is the mausoleum of the famous standard-bearer of the Prophet, who died with the first Mussulmans before Byzantium, and his body being found eight centuries after by Mahomet the Conqueror, was by him entombed in this place. The mosque is consecrated to him, and here the Padishàh comes to solemnly assume the sword of Othman; for this is the most sacred of the mosques of Constantinople, and the cemetery that surrounds it is the holiest of all cemeteries. Sultans, viziers, and grandees of all ranks lie here, their monuments surrounded with flowers, and splendid with marbles and arabesques of gold, and pompous inscriptions. A little apart is the mortuary temple of the muftis, surmounted by a great octagon dome under which repose the high priests in enormous black catafalques, with lofty muslin turbans upon them. It is an aristocratic quarter of tombs, lying in proud silence, and shaded by a multitude of branching acacias, oaks, and myrtles.

All this disappears, and I find myself walking through long naked chambers, between two ranks of motionless figures, looking like corpses nailed to the wall. The only similar impression that I can recall was when I entered the last room of the Tussaud exhibition in London, and saw the effigies of all the most horrible assassins that had ever lived in England. A museum of spectres, or rather an open sepulchre in which lay the mummies of the most famous personages of old Turkey, splendid, extravagant and ferocious, as they exist in the imaginations of poets. There are hundreds of great wooden images,

dressed in ancient costumes, erect, in rigid and haughty attitudes, with staring eyes, and hands on their swords, as if they awaited only a sign, to draw and fall on, as in the good old time. First comes the household of the Padishàh; the grand eunuch, the grand vizier, the mufti, chamberlains and grand officials, their heads covered with turbans of every color and form and size, pyramidal, spherical, square and prodigious, with brocaded caftans richly embroidered, with tunics of white and crimson silk, bound at the waist with cashmere shawls, and with their breasts covered with gold and silver, and their girdles full of jewelled weapons; two long files of strange and splendid scarecrows, admirably revealing the barbaric splendor and sumptuousness of the antique Ottoman court. Then come the pages who carry the Grand Signor's fur mantle, his turban, his footstool, and his sword. Then guards of different kinds, white and black eunuchs, like idols or magi, glittering and plumed, their heads covered with Persian caps, metal helmets, and every kind of strange head gear shaped like half-moons, cones and inverted pyramids; and armed with steel rods, poniards, and whips, a most truculent and ferocious band. Finally, the corps of janissaries, with its holy patron, Emin-babà, worn to a skeleton, in a white tunic, and officials of all grades in the various offices of the kitchen, and soldiers of every class, with all the emblems and devices of that insolent army that Mahmoud's grape-shot exterminated. The wildest imagination could form no idea of the mad confusion of costumes of king, priest, and brigand that make up a sort of ferocious pantomime (*pagliacciata*). The "water bearers," the "preparers of soup," the "superior cooks," the "chiefs of the scullions," and soldiers

of different special functions succeed each other in endless file, with brooms and spoons in their turbans, with bells attached to their tunics, with the famous pots that gave the signal for revolt, with great tall caps of skin, and flowing mantles from neck to heel, with wide girdles of carved metal, and gigantic sabres. Last of all came the mutes of the Seraglio, with the silken bowstring in their hands, and the dwarfs and buffoons in every variety of hideous visage and grotesque hat. The great glass cases which shut in all these figures, give to the place a certain look as of an anatomical museum, that adds to their corpse-like appearance. When you have reached the end you feel as if you had passed through a room in the old Seraglio, and had seen the whole court, frozen with terror at a look of menace from the Padishàh. To come out into the square of the Et-Meidan and meet the Pashàs in their black coats, and the nizams modestly dressed in zouave costume, is to be struck with the meekness and harmlessness of the Turkey of our day.

A firman opened for us the mausoleum of Mahmoud the Reformer, standing not far from the Et-Meidan in a garden of roses and jasmine. It is a beautiful white marble temple, of hexagon shape, with a dome sustained by Ionic pillars and lighted by seven windows, each looking into one of the principal streets of Stamboul. The interior walls are ornamented with bas-reliefs and decorated with carpets of brocaded silk. In the middle rises the sarcophagus covered with beautiful Persian shawls; and upon it is a fez, emblem of reform, with its erect plume sparkling with diamonds. Around the sarcophagus is a graceful balustrade inlaid with mother-of-pearl, which encloses four silver candelabra. The coffins of seven Sultanas stand

along the walls. Rich mats and carpets of various colors cover the floor. Here and there upon elegant lecterns sparkle precious Korans, written in letters of gold. In a silver casket there is a long roll of muslin covered with minute Arabic characters, traced by the hand of Mahmoud, when a prisoner in the old Seraglio, before ascending the throne. He ordained that this record of his youth, (a copy of the Koran) should be preserved near his tomb.

Among the images of those days come the Dervishes; and the most famous of the thirty-two orders, the mevlevi, have a notable *tekké* in the street of Pera. I went prepared to see the luminous visages of saints, rapt in visions of Paradise. But I was under a great delusion. The famous divine fury of the dance seemed to me only a theatrical representation. They are certainly very curious to behold, as they enter the circular mosque, one behind the other, wrapped in large brown cloaks, their heads bent down, their arms concealed, accompanied by barbaric music, monotonous and sweet, resembling the sound of the wind in the cypresses of the cemeteries. And when they whirl round, and bow themselves two by two before the Mirab, their movement is so languid and majestic that you have a sudden doubt as to their sex. Also it is fine when they throw off their mantles with a rapid gesture, and appearing in their long white woollen tunics, open their arms and throw back their heads, and one after the other begins to spin as if launched by an invisible hand; and when they spin all together in the middle of the mosque, white, light, and rapid, with flying garments and half-closed eyes, and when they fall upon the pavement as if all struck down at once by some superhuman apparition,

with a great cry of Allàh, and when they begin again, bowing and kissing their hands, and moving round about the mosque in a sort of grave and graceful half walk, half dance. But the ecstasy, the transfigured and rapt faces, that so many travellers see, I did not see. I saw only a number of agile and indefatigable dancers going through their business with supreme indifference. I saw suppressed laughter; and one young dervish exceedingly well-pleased at being stared at fixedly by an English lady; and I caught several of them in the act of biting when they should have kissed their neighbor's hand, who in his turn retorted with a pinch. Oh! the hypocrites! What I did see among those men, and they were of all ages and aspects was a grace and elegance of movement that might well be envied by some of our drawing-room dancers; and which is certainly a natural gift of the Oriental races, due to the structure of their bodies. I observed it still more one day when we were able to penetrate into a cell of the tekké, and see a dervish in the act of dressing for his functions. He was a tall, slender, beardless youth, with a girlish face. He drew in the girdle of his white petticoat, looking at himself in the glass, and turning to smile at us; he measured his waist with his hands, arranging himself in all haste, but with care and with an artistic eye, and seeing to every part of his dress, like a lady giving the last touches to her costume. Seen from behind, he was not unlike a girl dressing for a ball—and he was a monk!"

THE TURKS.

Now, before going on board of the Austrian steamer that lies in the Golden Horn ready to leave for the Black Sea, it is incumbent upon me to set down modestly, as from a poor traveller's point of view, some general observations that will respond to the question :—"What did you think of the Turks?" Observations, for the rest, spontaneous, and free from any considerations of recent events, gathered up here and there in my recollections of those days. At those words :—"What did you think of the Turks?" the impression produced in me by the first aspect of the male population of Stamboul, revives at once. Taking no count of the physical differences, it is an impression quite different from that produced by the people of any other country in Europe. One seems to be looking at a people—I do not know how better to render my idea—who are all perpetually thinking of the same thing. The same impression may be produced on the mind of an inhabitant of Southern Europe, at the sight of a people of the north; but there is a difference. These last have the serious and self-contained expression of persons occupied about their own affairs; but the Turks have the aspect of people who are thinking about some remote and indeterminate thing. They look like philosophers all bent upon one thesis, or somnambulists, walking about unconscious of the place they are in, or the objects about them. They have a look in their

eyes as if they were contemplating a distant horizon; and a vague sadness hovers round the mouth, like people accustomed to live much alone, and shut up within themselves. All have the same gravity, the same composed manner, the same reserve of language, the same look and gesture. From the Pasha to the shopkeeper, all are endowed with a certain dignified and aristocratic air, so that at first sight, and without the distinctions of dress, you would fancy there was no such thing as a plebeian in Constantinople. Their faces are cold, revealing nothing of their mind or thought. It is exceedingly rare to find among them one of those clear, open, expressive, and mobile visages that are so common among us. Every face is an enigma; their glance questions but makes no response; their lips betray no movement of the heart. It is impossible to express the deadening weight upon the stranger's soul produced by those mute, cold masks, those statuesque attitudes, those fixed eyes that say nothing. Sometimes you feel an almost irresistible impulse to shout out in the midst of them:—"Come, more like other men for once! tell us who you are, what you are thinking of, and what you see in the air before you, with those glassy eyes!" It is all so strange, that you doubt its being natural, and imagine for a moment that it is the result of some agreement among themselves, or the passing effect of some malady common to the Mussulmans of Stamboul. There is however, a notable difference in the aspect of certain of the population, in spite of the similarity of dress and manner. The original type of the Turkish race, which is robust and handsome, is now only to be found among the lower orders of the people, who by necessity, or from religious feeling, copy their

forefathers in sobriety of life. Among them may still be seen the vigorous body, well formed head, aquiline nose, brilliant eyes, and prominent jaw, and a something strong and bold in the whole person, that once distinguished the race. The Turks of the higher classes however, in whom old corruption, and a mingling of foreign blood have worked, have small heads, low foreheads, dull eyes, pendent lips, and bodies gross and corpulent. And to these physical differences may be added the still greater moral ones that exist between the real Turk of the antique race, and that ambiguous, colorless, inexpressive being called the reformed Turk. Thus it is difficult to study the Turkish people, since on one side, there is no possibility of mixing with or understanding them, and on the other, where there are facilities of observation and commerce, they represent neither the nature nor the idea of the nation. But even corruption and the new tint of European civilization have not sufficed to take away from the Turks of the upper classes that austere and vague melancholy of demeanor, which is seen among the people, and which produces an undeniably favorable impression. Judging from appearances only, the Turkish inhabitants of Constantinople are the most civilized and polite people in Europe. In the most solitary of the streets of Stamboul, the stranger may wander unmolested; he may visit the mosques, even during prayer time, with much more security of meeting with respect, than a Turk would have in our churches; in the crowd, one encounters no insolent look or word, nor even one of curiosity; laughter is rare, and noise and disturbance among the people very rare; there is no public indecency of any kind; the market is but a shade less dignified than the mosque; everywhere

a great sobriety of words and gestures; no songs, no clamorous voices, nothing to disturb the quiet passenger; faces, hands and feet quite clean, ragged or dirty garments are extremely rare; a universal and reciprocal manifestation of respect among all classes. But this is only on the surface. The rottenness is concealed. The corruption is dissimulated by the separation of the two sexes, idleness is hidden under tranquillity, dignity is the mask of pride, the composed gravity of countenance, which resembles thoughtfulness, conceals the mortal inertia of the intellect, and that which seems temperance of life is nothing but an absence of life in its true sense.

The nature, the philosophy, the entire existence of this people is signified by a particular condition of the mind and body which is called *kief*, and which is their supreme happiness. To have eaten sparely, to have drunk a cup of pure water, to have prayed, to feel the flesh in repose and the conscience tranquil, and to be somewhere whence can be seen a vast horizon, under the shade of a tree, following with the eye the flight of doves from a neighboring cemetery, distant sails of vessels, the hum of insects, the clouds of heaven, and the smoke of the narghilé, vaguely ruminating upon God, on death, on the vanity of earthly things, and the sweetness of eternal rest: this is *kief*. To be a quiet spectator on the great world's theatre; this is the Turk's highest aspiration. To this he is led by his ancient condition of shepherd, contemplative and slow, by his religion which ties his hands, leaving all things to God, by his traditions as a soldier of Islam, which teach him that there is no greater or more necessary act than that of fighting and conquering for his faith, and the battle over, every duty is fulfilled. All is fatal-

ity for him; man is only an instrument in the hands of Providence; it is useless for him to try and direct human affairs, which are already foreordained in heaven; earth is only a great caravanserai; God created man to pass through it praying and admiring His works; leave all things to Him; let that which is to befall, befall, and that which is to pass, let it pass; we will not move either to renew, or to preserve. Thus his one supreme desire is tranquillity, and he takes care to shield himself from all and every commotion that might disturb the placid harmony of his existence. Consequently, there is neither thirst for knowledge, nor fever of gain, nor desire for travel, nor unappeasable passion of love or ambition. The absence of so many intellectual and physical needs, to satisfy which we labor continually, makes the Turk unable to comprehend our reasons for labor. He considers it as an indication of a morbid aberration of mind in us. The ultimate scope of every fatigue being to him necessarily the attainment of that tranquillity which he seeks as the highest good, he thinks it wiser and better to reach it by the shortest way, and the intellectual and manual labor of the European races are to him only childish puerilities, in no way affecting or increasing his ideal felicity. Not working, he has no sense of the value of time, and therefore he neither understands nor desires those inventions of human genius to shorten time and space. He is capable of asking what is the use of a railway, unless it lead to a city where you can be happier than you are in this one. His fatalism, which considers a thought of the future as a vain thing, makes him prize nothing that does not contribute to his immediate enjoyment. Thus, the European, who forecasts and foresees, who lays the foundations

of a building whose completion he can not witness, consuming his strength, and sacrificing his peace, is an idle dreamer, belonging to a frivolous, mean, presumptuous, and bastard race, who aims at things which he, the Turk, disdains, unless, indeed he is constrained to value them, or go under. And he despises us. This appears to me to be the dominant sentiment which we Europeans inspire in the true Turk, who still constitutes the majority of the nation.

This feeling of contempt comes from various causes, the first of which is a very significant fact: *viz*—that for more than four centuries, although relatively small in numbers, they have held dominion over a large part of Europe holding a different faith to their own, and that they maintain it, despite of what may happen or has happened.* The smaller half of the nation sees the reason of this in the jealousies and discords of the European states; the larger part sees it in the superiority of their strength, and in our own debasement. It never enters into the mind of any Turk of the lower orders that Turkey in Europe could ever be subjected to the affront of a Christian conquest from the Dardanelles to the Danube. To our vault of civilization they oppose the fact of domination. Proud by nature, and fortified in their pride by the customs of the Empire, accustomed to hear, in the name of God, that they belong to a victorious race, born to the arts of war, and not to those of peace, in the habit also of living upon the labors of the conquered, they cannot comprehend how a people subject to their sway can have any rights whatever to civil equality. For them, possessed of a blind faith in the reign of a sensible Providence,

* Written before 1878.

their conquests in Europe were the fulfilment of God's decree. God himself, in sign of favor, invested them with this terrestrial sovereignty; and the fact that they preserve it, in the teeth of so many hostile forces, is an incontestible proof of their divine right, and at the same time a luminous argument in favor of the truth of their religion.

Against this sentiment all arguments of civilization, rights, and equality are useless. Civilization for them is only a hostile force, that would disarm them without fighting, and little by little, would treacherously debase them to an equality with their subject races, and despoil them of their domination. Thus, they not only despise it as a vain thing, but they fear it as an enemy; and as they may not subdue it by force, they oppose it with the invincible resistance of their inertia. To transform themselves, to be civilized, to raise their subjects to equal rights, is for them to enter into competition with those who labor and study; to acquire a new superiority; to make again by force of mind the conquest already made with the sword; and to this are opposed, not only their material interests as the dominating race, but their religious disdain for the infidel, their pride as soldiers, their indolence becomes a second nature, the character of their genius, which lacks every quality of imitation, and their five traditional ideas, which form the whole intellectual patrimony of the nation. Also according to the one example that they have before them in the reformers of their nation, who wear coats and gloves, and are supposed to accept European ideas, the new Turk is not worth the old Turk. He has adopted our clothes, our conveniences, our vices and our vanities, but he has not assimilated either our sentiments or

our ideas ; he has lost, in his partial transformation, what was good in the genuine Ottoman nature, and has acquired nothing to indemnify him from the European. To dress and to live after this fashion, is, according to the conception of the old Turk, to be civilized; and he in fact calls all those actions which not only his conscience as a Mahometan, but his conscience as an honest man condemns, doing, living, and thinking like a Frank. He considers the so called "civilized" ones, not as Mussulmans more advanced than others in the way of amelioration; but as persons fallen, ruined, something less than apostates, and betrayers of the nation. He distrusts novelty and rejects it utterly, if only because it comes to him from that quarter whose fatal teachings he sees every day. Every European innovation is for him an attempt against his character and against his interests. The government is revolutionary, the people are conservative ; the seeds of new ideas fall on hard, compact ground that refuses to fertilize them ; the hand that holds the sword waves it, but the blade turns in the handle.

These are the reasons why the attempts at reform which have been going on for fifty years have not yet penetrated the first shell of the nation. The names have been changed but the things remain. The little that has been done was effected by violence, and the people attribute to this the growing audacity of the infidel, the corruption that is seated in the heart of the empire, and all the national misfortunes. The organism, the life, the traditions of the Turkish people are those of a victorious army encamped in Europe ; it exercises the authority, enjoys the privileges and feels the pride of such an army ; and

like it, prefers a discipline of iron, its power over the vanquished conceded, to a milder discipline which would enchain its will as a conqueror. The hope that such a state of things, unchanged for centuries, can change in a few years, is a dream. The light vanguard of civilization may proceed as rapidly as it will, but the bulk of the army, still weighted with its heavy mediæval armor, either moves not at all, or at a great distance and with very slow steps. It must be remembered what things of yesterday are the blind despotism, the janissaries, the Seraglio garlanded with severed heads, the sentiment of the invincibility of the Osmanli, the Christian rayà considered and treated as an inferior creature, the ambassadors of France kept outside of the throne room, and there fed and clothed, in order to symbolize the vile poverty of the infidel in presence of the Grand Signor. But upon this argument, there is not, I think, great disparity of opinion between the Europeans and the Turks themselves. The disparity of judgment, and hence the difficulty for a stranger to come to a proper conclusion, is in the estimation of the native individual qualities of the Turk; since if you question the rayà you will hear nothing but the rage of the oppressed against the oppressor; and if you appeal to the free European of the colonies, who has no reason either to hate or fear the Turks, but on the contrary is in general content with the actual state of things, you will obtain a possibly conscientious but certainly excessively favorable opinion. The most of them agree in pronouncing the Turks to be honest, frank, loyal, and sincerely religious. But with regard to the religious sentiment, the preservation of which seems to be considered as a great merit, it is to be noted, that their religion does not oppose

itself either to their tendencies or to their interests; it even caresses their sensuality, justifies their laziness, and sanctifies their domination; they hold to it tenaciously, for they feel that in its dogma lies their nationality, and in its faith their destiny. With regard to their probity, many proofs are cited of individual facts such as might be paralleled among the most corrupt European peoples.

But it must be considered that ostentation has no small part in the probity which the Turk shows in his commerce with Christians, since he will often do from pride what he would not do from a simple conscientious impulse, and is unwilling to appear in any way less than persons to whom he holds himself superior by race and moral value. So also are born from the same conditions certain qualities, abstractly praiseworthy, such as frankness, pride, dignity, which perhaps might not have been preserved had the Turk been the oppressed instead of the oppressor. The sentiment of charity, however, can not be denied him, which is the only balm for the infinite woes of a badly ordered society, although it encourages indolence and multiplies misery; nor other sentiments which belong to a certain nobility of spirit, such as gratitude for small benefits received, the cultivation of the memory of the dead, hospitality and courtesy, and kindness to animals. His feeling of the equality of all social classes is also good; and a certain severe moderation in his character is undeniable, which transpires in the innumerable proverbs full of wisdom and prudence; a certain patriarchal simplicity, and a vague tendency to solitude and melancholy, which excludes vulgarity, or a baseness of soul. Nevertheless all these qualities float, so to speak, on the surface, in the un-

disturbed tranquillity of his ordinary life; and below, sleeping as it were, lie his violent Asiatic nature, his fanaticism, his fury for war, his barbarian ferocity, which being stimulated, break forth, and he becomes another man. There is a saying that the Turk has a mild nature, when he is not cutting off heads. The Tartar is sleeping within him. His native vigor is entire within him, preserved by the very softness of his life, and only used on supreme occasions. In him religious and warlike passion finds a field unspoiled by doubts, or by a rebellious spirit, or by the shock of ideas; an instantaneously inflammable substance; a blade forever sharpened, upon which is written the names of God and Sultan. Social life has scarcely softened in him the antique man of the steppe and cabin. Spiritually he still lives in the city as he lived among his tribe, solitary with his own thoughts. There is not, however, among them anything like a social life. The existence of the two sexes recalls the image of two parallel streams, never confounding their waters, except here and there by subterranean conjunction. The men gather together but have no real intimacy, no exchange of thought; they draw near, but are not bound; each prefers to any expansion of his own mind, that which a great poet defines as the "dull vegetation of ideas." Our rapid and varied conversation, jesting, discussing, teaching, renewing, our necessity for exchange of thought and feeling, in which the intelligence is excited and the heart warmed, is scarcely known among them. Their discourse is in general confined to material and necessary things. Love is excluded, literature is the privilege of few, science is a mere atom, politics is reduced to a question of names, business occupies but a very small part of their day.

The nature of their intelligence is contrary to abstract discussions. They comprehend well only that which they see and can touch; their language furnishing proof of this, for when they wish to express an abstraction, they must have recourse to Persian or Arabic, or a European language. . . .

The Turk tolerates the Armenian, despises the Jew, hates the Greek, and distrusts the Frank. He endures them all when necessary, as a big animal endures a myriad of flies upon his back, ready to make way with them as soon as they become unendurable. He looks on while things are changed, ordered, directed about him; takes from the European what may be useful to himself, accepts innovations whose material advantages he recognizes as immediate; hears without winking the lessons of civilization that are given him; changes laws and ceremonies, allows himself to be improved, embellished, and made to wear a mask; but within he is immutably, invincibly the same.

THE BOSPHORUS.

We had hardly gone on board of our vessel when a grey veil seemed to spread itself over Constantinople, and upon it were drawn the mountains of Moravia and Hungary, and the Alps of lower Austria. It is always a rapid change of scene for those who find on board their ship the faces and the accents of the country for which they are bound. We are imprisoned in a circle of German visages which make us feel before our time the cold and tedium of the north. Our friends have left us; we see only three white handkerchiefs waving from a distant caique, in front of the custom house, among a crowd of black boats. We are at the same point where our Sicilian steamer lay on the day of our arrival. It is a lovely autumn evening, warm and splendid. Constantinople has never looked grander or more smiling. For the last time we strive to fix in our memories the outlines of her immense proportions, and the soft enchanting color that surrounds her, making her like a visionary city, and once more we gaze into the perspective of that wondrous Golden Horn, which in a moment will be hidden from us. The vessel moves, and everything changes place. Scutari advances, Stamboul retires, Galata wheels round as if to see us depart. Adieu, O Golden Horn! A cloud of ships hides from us the suburb of Kassim-Pasha, another cloud obliterates Eyub, another, the sixth hill of Stamboul; the fifth disappears, the fourth is hid-

iron collars, or sitting for weeks and months motionless upon the top of a column or a tree, while around them came, fasting, praying, and prostrating themselves all ranks of people from princes to beggars, invoking a benediction or a word of counsel, as a favor from God.

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But all the beauty that has gone before is as nothing when we arrive before the Gulf of Buyukderé. Here is the supreme majesty and crowning glory of the Bosphorus. Here whoever has been weary of its loveliness and has irreverently expressed that feeling, will now uncover his head and ask pardon. We are in the middle of a vast lake surrounded with marvels, that make one wish to spin round like a dervish on the prow of the vessel in order to lose none of them. On the European shore, upon the slopes of a hill covered with greenery and dotted with innumerable villas, lies the city of Buyukderé, vast, and varied in color like a bouquet of flowers. The town extends to the right as far as a small bay, or gulf within a gulf, along the edge of which lies the village of Kefele-Kioi, and behind this opens a wide valley, all green with fields, and white with houses, which leads to the great aqueduct of Mahmoud and the forest of Belgrade. It is the same valley in which, according to tradition, the army of the first Crusade encamped; and one of the seven gigantic plane trees for which the place is famous, is called the tree of Godfrey de Bouillon.

From this to Kefele-Kioi, opens another bay, and beyond that is seen Terapia, lying at the foot of a dark green hill. When the eye turns from this towards Asia, it is with a sentiment of amazement. There before it is the highest mountain

of the Bosphorus, the *Giant*, in the form of an enormous green pyramid, and upon it is the famous sepulchre known in three different legends, as "the bed of Hercules," the "tomb of Amico," and the "grave of Joshua, Judge of the Hebrews." It is now in the custody of two dervishes, and is visited by infirm Mussulmans, who deposit fragments of their clothing upon it. The mountain pushes its green and flowery slopes down to the very shore, where between two promontories lies the lovely bay of Umuryeri. Before us shines the Black Sea; and if we turn towards Constantinople, we can still discern, beyond Terapia, in the dim purple distance, the bay of Kalender, Kieni-Kioi, Sultanié, like phantoms of some unreal world. The sun nears the horizon; the European shore begins to veil itself in shadows of grey and azure; the shore of Asia is still golden, the waters flash in the level rays; swarms of boats loaded with husbands and lovers returning from Constantinople, approach the shore, crossing other boats filled with ladies and children; from the cafés of Buyukderé come intermittent sounds of instrument and song; eagles circle about the Giant mountain, halcyons skim the water, dolphins dart about our vessel, the fresh breeze from the Black Sea cools our cheeks. This is the last vision. The ship steams out of the Gulf of Buyukderé. We see on the left the village of Saryer surrounded by cemeteries, and having in front a small bay, formed by the antique promontory of Simas, where stood the temple of Venus Meretrix, much worshipped by Greek sailors; then the village of Jeni-Makallé; then the fort of Teli-Tabia, which confronts another fort on the Asiatic side, at the foot of Giant mountain; then the castle of Rumuli-Cavak, the severe outline of its walls

Kioi is inhabited by numerous bankers, Armenian, Frank, and Greek. As we passed, the steamboat from Constantinople was just landing her passengers and taking in more who stood waiting in a crowd upon the steps. There were Turkish and European ladies, officers, monks, eunuchs, dandies, fezes, turbans, stove pipe hats, and military kepis, all mingled together; a spectacle that may be seen at all the twenty landing places on the Bosphorus, especially toward evening. Opposite Orta-Kioi, on the Asiatic shore, stands the village of Cheugel, or the *anchor*, from an old iron anchor found there by Mahomet the Second. And above it rises the white kiosk of fatal memory, from which Murad the Fourth, gnawed by savage envy, ordered to instant death the careless people who passed cheerfully singing through the fields. Turning again towards Europe, we see the pretty village and graceful port of Kuru-Chesmé, the ancient Anapolis, where Medea, disembarking with Jason, planted the famous laurel; and on the other side between two smiling villages, an immense parrack, like a palace, mirrored in the water. Behind these buildings is a hill crowned with gardens on which, almost hidden by trees, is the white kiosk where Soliman the Great lived three years in hiding, concealed in a small tower from the spies and executioners of his father Selim. But it is impossible to see them all; one village blots out another, and while we look, glide by one after the other palaces of Sultans and nobles, houses yellow, blue and purple, seeming to float upon the water, clothed with ivy and half hidden in shrubs and trees, with latticed balconies suspended over the sea, and marble steps running down to it. It is a species of Grand Canal in an immeasurable rural Venice.

Looking back towards Constantinople, we still see dimly the Seraglio hill and the enormous dome of Saint Sophia defined upon the limpid golden sky. The scene about us changes. We seem to be in a vast lake. A little bay opens to the right, another to the left. On the European side lies in a semicircle the pretty Greek town of Bebek, shaded by large trees, and with a fine ancient mosque, and an imperial kiosk where the Sultans used to give secret audience to European ambassadors. One portion of the town is quite hidden by trees; the other is scattered about the side of a hill covered with oaks, on the top of which is a grove famous for a very potent echo which answers to the trampling of one horse with the sound of a cavalry squadron. It is a sweet and smiling landscape, but the Asiatic shore at this point is a terrestrial paradise. On a broad promontory arching out into the sea stands Kandilli, many colored as a Dutch village, with a white mosque, and a gay cortege of villas. Behind it rises the hill of Igiadié, surmounted by a battlemented tower whence watch is kept for fires along the shore. To the right and left of Kandilli two valleys open to the sea; the valleys of the great and small "celestial streams," between which extend the beautiful fields of the Sweet Waters of Asia, shaded with sycamores, oaks and plane trees, and overlooked by the splendid kiosk of the mother of Abdul Medjid, surrounded by rose gardens. Beyond the larger of the "celestial streams," upon a height, stand the slender towers of the castle of Bajazet-Ilderim, confronting the castle of Mahomet Second, on the opposite shore. All this beautiful part of the Bosphorus was at that moment full of life and color. Hundreds of boats, sailing vessels, and steamers were passing to and fro; Turkish fisher-

men were casting their nets, from a sort of airy cages, sustained upon the water by crossed beams of wood; on one side a steamboat from Constantinople was landing a motley crowd of gayly dressed people, and on the other could be discerned groups of Turkish ladies and children seated under the trees and beside the stream of the Sweet Waters. It looked like a brilliant festival, and had an air of Acadia, that made me long to live and die in the midst of this Mussulman beatitude.

But again the spectacle changes and all these fancies take to flight. The Bosphorus now extends straight before us and has a vague resemblance to the Rhine, but always with the rich warm color of the East. To the left a cemetery covered with a forest of pines and cypresses, breaks the line of houses until then unbroken, and on the side of the rocky hill of Hermaion, rise the three great towers of Rumili-Hissar, the Castle of Europe, encircled by battlemented walls and smaller towers, that descend in picturesque ruin to the water side. This is the fortress that was built by Mahomet Second in the year before the conquest of Constantinople, in spite of the remonstrances of Constantine, whose ambassadors were driven back with threats of death. Here the current is most impetuous, (called by the Greeks "great current," and by the Turks, "current of Satan.") And the two shores are not more than five hundred yards apart. It was here that Mendocles of Samos threw his bridge of boats across, over which the seven hundred thousand soldiers of Darius passed, and here also are supposed to have passed *the ten thousand* returning from Asia. But there is no trace left either of the two columns of Mendocles, or of the throne cut in the rock from which the Persian monarch watched

the passage of his army. A little Turkish village is shyly perched at the feet of the castle, and the Asiatic shore recedes ever greener and gayer, with a constant succession of gardens, villas, and palaces. The steamer approaches now one now the other shore, and then details of the landscape can be seen more clearly: here the vestibule of the *selamlik* of some rich Turk's house, opening upon the sea, in which a stout major domo is smoking stretched at ease on a divan; there a eunuch is assisting two veiled ladies to step into their caique from the marble steps of a villa; further on a small garden surrounded by a hedge, and almost entirely covered by the branches of one great plane tree, at the foot of which sits cross-legged a white-bearded Turk, meditating upon the Koran; families grouped upon their terraces; flocks of sheep and goats feeding in the fields above; horsemen galloping along the shore and camels passing over the hills, with their strange figures outlined against the sky.

Suddenly the Bosphorus widens, the scene changes, we are again in a vast lake between two bays. To the left lies the Greek town of Istenia; called Sosthenios from the temple and winged statue erected there by the Argonauts, in honor of the tutelary genius, who had made them victorious in their struggle against Amico, king of Bebrice. Opposite Istenia on the Asiatic side, the Turkish village of Chibulkù shows itself among the trees, and here was once the renowned convent of the Digili, or *watchers*, who prayed and sang without cessation night and day. The shores of the Bosphorus are full of the memory of these cenobites and fanatical anchorites of the fifteenth century, who wandered about the hills, bending under the weight of chains and crosses, tormented by hair shirts and

den, the third vanishes, the second is gone; the hill of the Seraglio alone remains, and thank heaven, we shall not lose that for a while. We are steaming rapidly through the very middle of the Bosphorus. The quarter of Top-hané, the quarter of Funduclù are past; the white carved façade of the palace of Dolma-Bagtché, flies by; and for the last time Scutari extends her amphitheatre of hills, covered with gardens and villas. Adieu, Constantinople! great and beloved city, dream of my childhood, aspiration of my youth, indelible memory of my life! Adieu, lovely and immortal queen of the East! May time change thy destiny, taking nothing from thy beauty, and may my sons one day behold thee with the same fervor of youthful enthusiasm with which I see and leave thee!

The sadness of farewell, however, endures but for a moment, because another Constantinople, more vast, more beautiful, more gay than that left behind extends before us on the two loveliest shores in the world.

The first village on the left, or European shore is Bescik-Tass; a large Turkish village at the foot of a hill, around a small port. Behind opens a pretty valley; the ancient valley of the *Allori di Stefano* which runs towards Pera; among the houses rises a group of plane trees that shade the tomb of the famous corsair Barbarossa; a large cafe, crowded with people, projects out over the water, sustained by a forest of piles; the port is full of boats and caiques; the shore thronged with people, the hill covered with vegetation, and the valley full of houses and gardens. But it has not the look of a suburb of Constantinople. There is already the air of gayety and grace proper to the villages on the Bosphorus. We have scarcely beheld it, when it is

gone, and we are passing the palace of Cheragan, or rather a row of palaces built of white marble, simple and elegant, with long files of pillars, crowned with terraces and balustrades, and bordered by a living fringe of the white birds of the Bosphorus, standing out in bold relief against the dark verdure of the hills. While we try to catch Cheragan as it flits by, on the other side the Asiatic shore is fleeting on unseen, with delicious villages, pretty enough to buy and carry off like jewels. Thus vanishes Kuzgundgiuk, tinted with all the colors of the iris, with its little port, where tradition says that the heifer Io landed after having swam across the Bosphorus to escape the gad-flies of Juno; Istanros with its beautiful mosque with two minarets passes; the imperial palace of Beylerbey appears and disappears, with its conical and pyramidal roofs, and its walls of grey and yellow, looking odd and mysterious, like a convent of princesses; and then the village of Beylerbey, reflected in the water, with Mount Bulgarlù rising behind; and all these villages gathered or scattered at the foot of green hills whose luxuriant vegetation seems ready to cover them all over, are connected together by garlands of villas and houses, and long files of trees running along the shore, or coming down in zig-zags from the heights to the sea, through gardens and fields of infinite shades of green.

There is nothing for it but to resign ourselves to see everything at a glance, turning continually our heads from side to side, with the regularity of automata. A little beyond Cheragan, is seen on the left, the large village of Orta-Kioi; above which the mosque of the Sultana Validé shows its shining dome, and the graceful roofs of the palace of Riza-Pashà are seen, with the white walls of the imperial kiosk of la Stella. Orta-

drawn upon the rosy twilight sky. Opposite again is another fortress, crowning the promontory, where once stood the temple of the twelve gods, built by the Argive Frygos, near that of Jove, "distributor of propitious winds," founded by the Chalcedonians, and converted by Justinian into a church consecrated to the Archangel Michael. This is the point where the Bosphorus narrows for the last time, between the last buttresses of the mountains of Bythinia, and the extreme point of the chain of the Hemus; always considered as the first gate of the canal, to be defended against northern invasion, and the theatre, consequently, of obstinate struggles between Byzantine and barbarian, Venetian and Genoese. Two Genoese fortresses facing one another between which an iron chain was thrown closing the entrance, are still to be seen with their ruined walls and towers.

From this point the Bosphorus goes widening to the sea; the shores are high and steep, like two enormous bastions, and show only a few groups of mean houses, a solitary tower, the ruins of a monastery, or the remains of some ancient mole. After some time we can still see gleaming on the European side the lights of the village of Buyuk-Liman, and on the other the lantern of a fortress which dominates the promontory of Elephanta; then, on the left, the great rocky mass of ancient Gipopoli, where once stood the palace of Phineo, infested by the Harpies; and on the right the fortress of Cape Poiraz, like a vague dark stain upon the greyish sky. Here the shores are far apart; the canal is already a gulf, the night descends, the sea wind moans among the cordage of our ship, and the gloomy *Mar Cimmerium* extends before us her livid and restless hori-

zon. But the imagination cannot yet detach itself from those shores so full of poetic memories, is not yet satiated with the beauty of nature; it flies to the feet of the Balkans to seek the tower of the exiled Ovid, and the marvellous wall of Anastastius; and wanders off over a vast volcanic land, across forests invested by wild boars and jackals, and inhabited by a savage and ill-omened race, in search of the *fera litori Ponti.* Two fiery points like the eyes of two Cyclops break the darkness for the last time; the Anaduli-Fanar, or Asian light on one side, the Rumili-Fanar, or European light on the other, below which the fabulous Simplegadés show vaguely for an instant the tormented peoples of their rocks. Then the two coasts are only two dark lines, and then, *quocumque adspicias, nihil est nisi pontus et aer,* as poor Ovid sang.

My beautiful dream of the Orient is no more.

FINIS.

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